



# A LITERARY HISTORY OF PERSIA

VOLUME I

*From the Earliest Times  
until Firdawsi*

10917

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# Preface

FOR many years I had cherished a desire to write a history of the intellectual and literary achievements of the Persians, somewhat on the lines of that most admirable work, Green's *Short History of the English People*, a work which any writer may be proud to adopt as a model, but which few can hope to rival and none to surpass. Considering the immense number of books which have been written about Persia, it is strange that so few attempts should hitherto have been made to set forth in a comprehensive yet comparatively concise and summary form the history of that ancient and most interesting kingdom. Excellent monographs on particular periods and dynasties do indeed exist in plenty, but of general histories of Persia those of Sir John Malcolm and Clements Markham are still the chief works of reference in English, though they no longer represent, even approximately, the present level of knowledge (enormously raised in recent times by the unremitting labours of an ever increasing band of students and scholars), in addition to which they both deal rather with the external political conditions of Persia than with the inner life of her people.

Conscious of the magnitude and difficulty of the task, and constantly engaged in examining and digesting the abundant and almost unexplored materials which every large collection of Oriental manuscripts yields, I might probably have continued to postpone indefinitely an attempt for which I felt

myself ever more rather than less unprepared, had I not received almost simultaneously two separate invitations to contribute a volume on Persian Literature or Literary History to a series which in each case was of conspicuous merit, though in plan, scope, and treatment the difference between the two was considerable. In choosing between the two, I was less influenced by priority of appeal, extent of remuneration, or personal predilection, than by the desire to secure for myself the amplest field and the broadest. I had almost said the more philosophical plan. The model placed before me in the one case was Jusserand's charming *Literary History of the English People*, the conception and execution of which (for reasons more fully explained in the Introductory chapter of the following work) so delighted me that I thereupon decided to make for the series to which it belonged the effort which I had long contemplated. For it was the intellectual history of the Persians which I desired to write, and not merely the history of the poets and authors who expressed their thoughts through the medium of the Persian language; the manifestations of the national genius in the fields of Religion, Philosophy, and Science interested me at least as much as those belonging to the domain of Literature in the narrower sense, while the linguistic vehicle through which they sought expression was, from my point of view, indifferent. I trust that my readers will realise this at the outset, so that they may not suffer disappointment, nor feel themselves aggrieved, because in this volume more is said about movements than books, and less about books written in Persian than about those written in Pahlawí, Arabic, or some other language.

It was originally intended that the work should be completed in one volume, carrying the history down to the present day. But I soon convinced myself (and, with more difficulty, my publisher) that this was impossible without grave modification (and, from my point of view, mutilation) of my original plan. At first I hoped to carry this volume

down to the Mongol Invasion and the extinction of the Caliphate of Baghdad in the thirteenth century, which, as I have elsewhere observed (pp 210-211 *infra*), is the great turning-point in the history of Islam, but even this finally proved impracticable within the limits assigned to me, and I ultimately found myself obliged to conclude this part of my work with the immediate precursors of Firdawsi, the writers and poets of the Samanid and Buwayhid dynasties.

This division is, perhaps, after all the best, since the Prolegomena with which the student of Persian literature ought to be acquainted are thus comprised in the present volume, while the field of Persian literature in the narrower sense will, with the aid of one chapter of recapitulation, be entirely covered by the second, with which it is intended that this should be supplemented. Thus, agreeably to the stipulations imposed by my publisher, the two volumes will be independent one of the other, this containing the Prolegomena, and that the History of Persian Literature within the strict meaning of the term.

My chief fear is lest, in endeavouring to present to the general reader the results attained by Oriental scholarship, and embodied for the most part in books and periodicals which he is unlikely to read, or even to meet with, I may have fallen, so to speak, between two stools, and ended by producing a book which is too technical for the ordinary reader, yet too popular for the Orientalist by profession. To the former rather than the latter it is addressed but most of all to that small but growing body of amateurs who, having learned to love the Persian poets in translation, desire to know more of the language, literature, history, and thought of one of the most ancient, gifted, and original peoples in the world. In a country which offers so few inducements as England to what may be called the professional study of Oriental letters and languages, and which consequently lacks well organised Oriental schools such as exist at Paris, Berlin, St Petersburg,

and other Continental capitals, it is chiefly with the amateur (and I use the word in no disparaging sense, but as meaning one whose studies are prompted by taste and natural inclination rather than by necessity) that the future extension and development of these studies lies. To him (or her), therefore, this book is especially addressed; and should it prove of use to any of those whose interest in the East is more real and abiding than that of the ordinary reader, but who have neither the opportunity nor the apparatus of study necessary to the professional student, I shall deem myself amply rewarded for my labour in compiling it.

Concerning the system of transliteration of Oriental names and words here adopted little need be said, it is essentially that approved by the Royal Asiatic Society for the transcription of the Arabic character, and will be readily understood by all who are familiar with that script. That consistency (or, as I fear may be said by some of my critics, pedantry) has compelled me to write Háfídh, Nídhámí, ‘Umar, Fírdawsí, &c., for the more popular Háfiz, Nízámí, Omar, and Ferdousí may be regretted from some points of view, but will at least generally save the student from doubts as to the correct spelling in the original character of the names occurring in the following pages. I only regret that this consistency has not been more complete, and that I have in a few cases (notably Ádharbáyján, Azarbáyján) allowed myself to be swayed by actual usage at the expense of uniformity. But at least the reader will not as a rule be puzzled by finding the same name appearing now as ‘Uthmán, now as ‘Usmán, and again as ‘Osmán, according as it is sought to represent its Arabic, its Persian, or its Turkish pronunciation.

And so I commend my book to the benevolent reader, and, I hope I may add, to the not less benevolent critic. Of its many defects, alike in plan and execution, I am fully conscious, and to others, no doubt, my attention will soon be called. But “*whoso desireth a faultless friend remains friend-*

*less*," says a well known Eastern adage, and it is no less true that he who would write a flawless book writes nothing. I have admitted that I felt myself unprepared for so great a task but I should have felt equally unprepared ten or twenty years hence, the subject ever widening before our eyes more rapidly than the knowledge of it grows in our minds. Even the most imperfect book, if it breaks fresh ground, may, though itself doomed to oblivion, prepare the way for a better.

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SEPTEMBER 14 1902



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BOOK I

*ON THE ORIGINS AND GENERAL HISTORY  
OF THE PEOPLE LANGUAGES AND  
LITERATURES OF PERSIA*



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

THIS book, as its title implies, is a history, not of the different dynasties which have ruled in Persia and of the kings who composed those dynasties, but of the Persian people. It is, moreover, the history of that people written from a particular point of view—the literary. In other words, it is an attempt to portray the subjective—that is to say, the religious, intellectual, and æsthetic—characteristics of the Persians as manifested in their own writings, or sometimes, when these fail, in those of their neighbours. It is not, however, precisely a history of Persian Literature, since, on the one hand, it will exclude from consideration the writings of those who, while using the Persian language as the vehicle of their thought, were not of Persian race, and, on the other hand, it will include what has been written by Persians who chose as their medium of expression some language other than their mother tongue. India, for example, has produced an extensive literature of which the language is Persian, but which is not a reflex of the Persian mind, and the same holds good in lesser degree of several branches of the Turkish race, but with this literature we are in no wise concerned. Persians, on the other hand, have continued ever since the Muhammadan Conquest—that is to say, for more than twelve hundred years—to use the Arabic

language almost to the exclusion of their own in writing on certain subjects, notably theology and philosophy ; while during the two centuries immediately succeeding the Arab invasion the language of the conquerors was, save amongst those who still adhered to the ancient national faith of Zoroaster, almost the sole literary medium employed in Persia. To ignore this literature would be to ignore many of the most important and characteristic manifestations of the Persian genius, and to form an altogether inadequate judgment of the intellectual activity of that ingenious and talented people.

The term "Persian" as used by us, and by the Greeks, Jews, Syrians, Arabs, and other foreigners, has a wider signification than that which it originally bore.

Meaning of the  
term Persian

The Persians call themselves *Īrānī* and their land *Īrān*,<sup>1</sup> and of this land *Pārsa*, the Persis of the Greeks, the modern *Fārs*,<sup>2</sup> is one province out of several. But because that province gave birth to the two great dynasties (the Achæmenian in the sixth century before, and the Sāsānian

<sup>1</sup> *Īrān*, *Ērān*, *Anān*, the *Airiyana* of the Avesta, is the land of the Aryans (*Ariya*, *Ariyā* of the Avesta, Sanskrit *Āryā*), and had therefore a wider signification than the term Persia, which is equivalent to *Iran* in the modern sense, has now Bactria (Balkh), Sogdiana (Sughd), and Khwārazm were *Īrānian* lands, and the Afghans and Kurds are Iranian peoples.

<sup>2</sup> The *p*-sound does not exist in Arabic, and is replaced by *f*. *Fārs*, *Isfahan*, &c., are simply the arabicised forms of *Pārs*, *Ispahan*. The adjective *Fārsī* (or *Pārsī*) denotes the official language of Persia (which is at the same time the mother-tongue of the great majority of its inhabitants, and the national language in as full a sense as English is the national language of Great Britain and Ireland), and in this application is equivalent to *Iranī*. As applied to a man, however, *Fārsī* means a native of the province of Fars. In India *Pārsī* (Parsee) means of the Persian (i.e., the ancient Persian, or Zoroastrian) religion, and the term has been re-imported in this sense into Persia. To call the province of Fārs "*Fārsistān*," as is sometimes done by European writers, is quite incorrect, for the termination *-istān* ("place of," "land of") is added to the name of a people to denote the country which they inhabit (e.g., Afghanistan, Baluchistan), but not to the name of a country or province.

in the third century after Christ) which made their arms formidable and their name famous in the West, its meaning was extended so as to include the whole people and country which we call Persian just as the tribe of Angles, though numerically inferior to the Saxons, gave their name to England and all that the term English now connotes. As in our own country Angles, Saxons, and Jutes merged in one English people, and the dialects of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex in one English language, so in Irân the inhabitants of Parthia, Media, and Persis became in course of time blended in one Persian people, and their kindred dialects (for already Strabo found them in his time "almost of the same speech, *ομογλωττοι παρα μικρον*)<sup>3</sup> in one Persian tongue. (The Persian language of to day *Fârsî*, the language of Fârs, is then the lineal offspring of the language which Cyrus and Darius spoke, and in which the proclamations engraved by their commands on the rocks of Behistun (now called *Bi situn*) and Nîqsh i-Rustam, and the walls and columns of Persepolis, are drawn up. These inscriptions of the Achæmenian kings, who ruled in Persia from B C 550 until the last Darius was overthrown by Alexander the Great, B C 330, are sufficiently extensive and well understood to show us what the Persian language was more than 2,400 years ago.

Remote as is the period from which the earliest written monuments of the Persian language date, they do not, unfortunately, present an unbroken series. On the contrary, their continuity is broken between the Achæmenian period and the present day by two great gaps corresponding with two great foreign invasions which shattered the Persian power and reduced the Persian people to the position of a subject race. The first of these, beginning with the Greek invasion under Alexander and ending with the overthrow of the Parthian by the Sâssânian

<sup>3</sup> Strabo xv 724

✓ Th Pers  
lang  
A hæn lan  
times.

✓ Interrupt on  
th ries f  
writ n m u-  
m ts fth P  
lanl guage.

dynasty, embraces a period of about five centuries and a half (B.C. 330—A.D. 226). The *second*, beginning with the Arab invasion and Muhammadan Conquest, which destroyed the Sásánian dynasty and overthrew the Zoroastrian religion, though much shorter, had far deeper and more permanent effects on the people, thought, and language of Persia. "Hellenism," as Noldeke says, "never touched more than the surface of Persian life, but *Ílán* was penetrated to the core by Arabian religion and Arab ways." The Arab conquest, though presaged by earlier events,<sup>\*</sup> may be said to have begun with the battles of Buwayb and Qádisiyya (A.D. 635–637), and to have been completed and confirmed by the death of the last Sásánian king, Yazdígird III, A.D. 651 or 652. The end of the Arabian period cannot be so definitely fixed. In a certain sense it endured till the sack of Baghdad and murder of al-Musta'sim bi'lláh, the last 'Abbásid Caliph, in A.D. 1258 by the Mongols under Hulágú Khán, the grandson of Changíz Khán. Long before this, however, the Arab power had passed into the hands of Persian and Turkish vassals, and the Caliph, whom they sometimes cajoled and conciliated, but more often coerced or ignored, had ceased to exercise aught beyond a spiritual authority save in the immediate neighbourhood of Baghdad. Broadly speaking, however, the revival of the Persian language proceeded *pari passu* with the detachment of the Persian provinces from the direct control of the Caliph's administration, and the uprising of local dynasties which yielded at most a merely nominal obedience to the 'Abbásid court. Of these dynasties the Táhírids (A.D. 820) are sometimes accounted the first, but they may more truly be considered to begin with the Saffárids (A.D. 867), Sámánids (A.D. 874), and Buwayhids (A.D. 932), and to reach their full development in the Ghaznawids and Seljúqs.

\* Notably by the Battle of Dhú Qár in the reign of Khusraw Parwíz (A.D. 604–610).

(The history of the Persian language falls, therefore, into three well defined periods, as follows —

Period I the  
de lop t f  
th i cal n  
La guage. I *The Achæmenian Period* (B.C. 550–330), represented by the edicts and proclamations contained in the Persian cuneiform inscriptions, which, though of considerable extent, are similar in character and style, and yield a vocabulary of not much more than 400 separate words<sup>1</sup>. The language represented by these inscriptions, and by them only, is generally called *Old Persian*<sup>2</sup>.

II *The Sasanian Period* (A.D. 226–652), represented by inscriptions on monuments, medals, gems, seals, and coins, and by a literature estimated as, roughly speaking, equal in bulk to the Old Testament<sup>3</sup>. This literature is entirely Zoroastrian and almost entirely theolo-  
Middle Persi n,  
o P hlawi, gical and liturgical. The language in which it is written, when disentangled from the extraordinary graphic system, known as *Huzvaresh* (*Zuwarishn*), used to represent it, is little more than a very chaotic form of the present speech of Persia devoid of the Arabic element. It is generally known as *Pahlawi*, sometimes as *Middle Persian*. Properly speaking, the term *Pahlawi* applies rather to the script than the language, but, following the general usage we shall retain it in speaking of the official language of Sâssânian Persia. This script continued

Darmes et al. *Études Iramennes* vol. i p. 7

The best editions of these inscriptions are those of Kossovitz (St Petersburg 1872) and Spiegel (Leipzig 1861). In the former the texts are given both in the cuneiform and in the Roman character and the translation in Latin. In the latter the texts are transliterated and the translation is in German.

<sup>1</sup> West, *On the Extant Language and Age of Pahlavi Literature* p. 402 also the excellent account of *Pahlavi Literature* by the same writer in Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie* vol. ii pp. 75–129. West divides the Pahlavi literature into translations of Avesta texts (141,000 words) texts on religious subjects (446,000 words) and texts on non-religious subjects (41,000 words) total about 628,000 words.

to be used on the coins of the early Caliphs and the independent *Spáhpat*s or *Ispahbadh*s of Tabaristán for more than a century after the Arab conquest, and for at least as long additions continued to be made by the Zoroastrians of Persia to the Pahlawí literature, but the latest of them hardly extend beyond the ninth century of our era\*. Practically speaking the natural use of what we understand as Pahlawí ceased about a thousand years ago

III *The Muhammadan Period* (from about A D 900 until the present day). When we talk of "Modern Persian," we mean simply the Persian language as it reappears after the Arab Conquest, and after the adoption of the Muhammadan religion by the vast majority of the inhabitants of Persia. The difference between late Pahlawí and the earliest form of Modern Persian was, save for the Arabic element generally contained in the latter, merely a difference of script, and script in this case was, at this transition period (the ninth century of our era), mainly a question of religion. In the East, even at the present day, there is a tendency to associate written characters much more than language with religion. There are Syrian Christians whose language is Arabic, but who prefer to write their Arabic in the Syriac character, and these *Karshum* writings (for so they are called) form a considerable literature. So also Turkish-speaking Armenians and Greeks often employ the

Modern or Neo-Persian

Dislike of written characters associated with other religions

\* West places the compilation of the *Dínkart*, *Bundahish*, and *Ai-da Viráf Námak* in the ninth century of our era (*loc cit*, pp 433, 436, 437), and regards it as "unlikely that any of the commentators quoted in the Pahlawí translations of the Avesta could have written later than the sixth century." The compilation of the *Bahman Yasht*, however, is placed by Professor Darmesteter as late as A D 1099-1350 (*Etudes Iraniques*, vol II, p 69). The interesting *Guyastak Abalish* (edited and translated by A Barthélemy, Paris, 1887) describes a controversy between a Zoroastrian priest and the heretic Abalish held in the presence of the Caliph al-Ma'mun (A D 813-833), and therefore obviously cannot have been composed earlier than the ninth century.

Armenian and Greek characters respectively when they write Turkish. Similarly the Jews of Persia have a pretty extensive literature written in the Persian language but in the Hebrew character, while Moors of Spain who had forgotten how to speak Arabic wrote Spanish treatises in the Arabic character.<sup>1</sup> (The Pahlawi script was even more closely associated in the Eastern mind with the Zoroastrian religion than was the Arabic character with the faith of Islam and when a Persian was converted from the former to the latter creed he gave up, as a rule, once and for all a method of writing which was not only cumbrous and ambiguous in the highest degree, but also fraught with heathen associations. Moreover, writing (and even reading) was probably a rare accomplishment amongst the Persians when the Pahlawi character was the means of written communication, save amongst the Zoroastrian *magi* and *dastbars* and the professional scribes (*dapir*). We read in the *Kārnāmāh* : *Artakhshir* : *Papakān*,<sup>2</sup> or *Book of the Deeds of Ardashir, the son of Papak* (the founder of the Sāsānian dynasty)—one of the three Pahlawi romances or “historical novels” which time has spared to us in the original form<sup>3</sup>—that when this prince “reached the age for the higher

It is even said that a debased Arabic script is still used by the peasants inhabiting the valleys of the Alpujarras mountains in their love letters.

Translated into German by Professor Noldeke of Strassburg and published in vol. iv of the *Beiträge zur Kunde des Indogermanischen Sprachen* on the occasion of Professor Benfey's attainment of the fiftieth year of his Doctorate as well as in the form of the *iraç* : *far* (Göttingen 1879) here cited (pp. 38-9 and n. 3 on former). The Pahlawi text in the original and in the Roman characters with Gujarati translation edited by Kalkobad Adarbad Noshervan was published at Bombay in 1896.

<sup>1</sup> The others are the *Book of Zarr* and the *Story of Khusrav Kaw īdh īn and his Page*. The former has been translated by Geiger in the *Sitzungsberichte d. philos.-philolog. u. histor. Class* 1890 and reviewed by Noldeke in vol. xlv (189) of the *Zeitschrift d. D. Morgenländ. Gesellschaft* pp. 136-145. See also Noldeke's *Persische Studien* II in vol. cxxvi of the *Sitzungsber. d. A. Akad. in Wien philos. histor. Class* pp. 1-12.

education, he attained such proficiency in Writing, Riding, and other accomplishments that he became famous throughout all Páís." So also we read in the account which the great historian Tabarí<sup>2</sup> gives of the reign of Shápúr, the son and successor of Ardashír, that "when he came to the place where he wished to found the city of Gundê-Shápúi, he met there an old man named Bêl, of whom he enquired whether it would be permitted him to build a town on this site. Bêl answered, 'If I at my advanced age can learn to write, then is it also permitted thee to build a town on this spot,'" by which answer, as Noldeke has pointed out, he meant to imply (though in the issue he proved mistaken) that both things were impossible. To the Pahlawí script, in short, might well be applied the Frenchman's well-known definition of speech as "the art of concealing thought"; it had no intrinsic merits save as a unique philological puzzle, and, once deprived of the support of religion, ancient custom, and a conservative priesthood, it could not hold its own against the far more legible and convenient Arabic character, of which, moreover, a knowledge was essential to every Muslim. But the fact cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the peculiarity of Pahlawí (as will be more fully explained presently) lay in the script only, and that a Pahlawí book read aloud by a Zoroastrian priest or scribe of the ninth century of our era would have been perfectly intelligible to a contemporary Persian Muhammadan; and that if the latter had taken it down in the Arabic

<sup>2</sup> See the excellent article on *Tabarí* (Abú Ja'far Muhammad b. Ja'ir of Ámul in Tabaristan, b. A.D. 839, d. A.D. 923) in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The publication of the text of this immense and most precious chronicle by Professor de Goeje of Leyden and other distinguished Arabic scholars is one of the greatest recent achievements of Oriental learning. A German translation of the portion of this chronicle which deals with the history of the Sasanian period, accompanied by a most valuable Introduction and copious notes and appendices, has been published by Professor Noldeke (Leyden, 1879) under the title *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden*. The story here cited will be found in its entirety at p. 41 of the last-named work.

character as he heard it read, what he wrote would have been simply "Modern Persian" in its most archaic form without admixture of Arabic words. Indeed, so comparatively slight (so far as we can judge) are the changes which the Persian spoken language has undergone since the Sasanian period, that if it were possible for an educated Persian of the present day to be suddenly thrust back over a period of fourteen or fifteen hundred years, he would probably be able to understand at least a good deal of what his countrymen of that period were saying. The gulf which separates that speech from Old Persian is far wider, and the first Sasanian king, notwithstanding the accomplishments which made him "famous throughout all Pers," if he could similarly have travelled backwards in time for some six centuries, would have comprehended hardly a word of what was said at the Achæmenian court.

It is impossible to fix a definite date at which Modern Persian literature may be said to have begun. Probably

1/
M<sup>E</sup><sub>d</sub> P<sup>r</sup>s<sup>f</sup><sub>a</sub> L<sup>teratur</sup>
 Persian converts to Islâm began to write their language in the Arabic character very soon after the Arab Conquest—that is to say, some time in the eighth century of our era. The first attempts of this sort were probably mere memoranda and notes,

P
 followed, perhaps, by small manuals of instruction in the doctrines of Islâm. Fragmentary utterances in Persian, and even brief narratives are recorded here and there in the pages of early Arabic writers, and these at least serve to show us that the Persian of late Sasanian and early Muhammadan times was essentially the same as that with which we meet in the earliest monuments of Modern Persian literature. Of actual books of any extent, the Persian translation of Tabarî's history made for Mansur I, the Sâmânid prince, in A.D. 963 by his minister Balâmî, the *Materia Medica* of Abu Mansur Muwaffaq b. 'Alî of Herât (preserved to us in the unique MS. of Vienna dated A.D. 1055,

of which a beautiful reprint was published by Seligmann in 1859) composed for the same royal patron; and the second volume of an old commentary on the Qur'án (Cambridge University Library, Mm. 4. 15)<sup>1</sup> belonging, apparently, to about the same period, are, so far as is known, the oldest surviving specimens.

It is very generally assumed, however, that in Persian, as in Arabic, verse preceded prose. One story, cited by several of the native biographers (*e.g.*, Dawlatsháh in his *Lives of the Poets*), ascribes the first Persian couplet to the joint invention of Bahrám Gúr the Sásánian (A.D. 420-438), and his mistress Dil-árám.<sup>2</sup> Another quotes (on the authority of Abú Táhir al-Khátúní, a writer of the twelfth century of our era) a Persian couplet engraved on the walls of the *Qasr-i-Shírín* ("Palace of Shírín," the beloved of Khusraw Parwíz, A.D. 590-628), said to have been still legible in the time of 'Adudu'd-Dawla the Buwayhid (tenth century of our era).<sup>3</sup> Another tells how one day in Níshápúr the Amír 'Abdu'lláh b. Táhir (died A.D. 844) was presented with an old book containing the *Romance of Wámiq and 'Adhra*, "a pleasing tale, which wise men compiled, and dedicated to King Núshírwán" (A.D. 531-579), and how he ordered its destruction, saying that the Qur'án and Traditions of the Prophet ought to suffice for good Muslims, and adding, "this book was written by Magians and is accursed in our eyes."<sup>4</sup> Yet another story given by Dawlatsháh attributes the first line of metrical Persian to the

<sup>1</sup> See my *Description of an Old Persian Commentary* in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for July, 1894, pp. 417-524, and my *Catalogue of the Persian MSS. in the Cambridge University Library*, pp. 13-37.

<sup>2</sup> Dawlatsháh (ed. Browne), pp. 28-29. See also Blochmann's *Prosody of the Persians*, p. 2, Darmesteter's *Origines de la Poésie Persane*, first paragraph.

<sup>3</sup> See A. de Biberstein Kazimírski's *Divan de Menontchehr* (Paris, 1886), p. 7, and Dawlatsháh, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> Kazimírski, pp. 6-7. Dawlatsháh, p. 30.

gleeful utterance of a little child at play, the child being the son of Yr'qub b Layth "the Coppersmith," founder of the Šaffārī ("Brazier") dynasty (A D 868-878):<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad 'Awfī, the author of the oldest extant *Biography of Persian Poets*,<sup>2</sup> who flourished early in the thirteenth century of our era (A D 1210-1235), asserts that the first Persian poem was composed by one 'Abbās of Merv in honour of the Caliph al Ma'mūn, the son of Hārūn r Rāshid, on the occasion of his entry into that city in A D 809, and even cites some verses of the poem in question, but, though this assertion has been accepted as a historical fact by some scholars of repute,<sup>3</sup> the scepticism of others<sup>4</sup> appears to the writer well justified. (All that can be safely asserted is that modern Persian literature, especially poetry, had begun to flourish considerably in Khurāsān during the first half of the tenth century, especially during the reign of the Šāhīnshāh prince Nasr II (A D 913-942), and thus covers a period of nearly a thousand years, during which time the language has changed so little that the verses of an early poet like Rudagī are at least as plain to a Persian of to-day as is Shakespear to a modern Englishman.

Most of the legends as to the origin of Persian poetry are, as we have seen, unworthy of very serious attention, and

See A de Biberstein Kazimirski's *Menoutchehri* (Paris 1886) pp 7-8 and Dawlatshah (ed Browne) pp 30-31.

The *Lubab ul Albāb* a very rare book represented so far as is known only by two MSS one (Sprenger 318 No 637 of Pertsch's Catalogue) in the Berlin Library the other in the possession of Lord Crawford and Balcarre whose generosity has entrusted to my hands this priceless treasure which I propose to publish in my series of Persian historical texts. This MS formerly belonged to John Bardoe Elliot by whom it was lent to Nathaniel Bland who described its contents and scope in vol ix of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1846) pp 111-126. See also Sprenger's *Catalogue of the Libraries of the King of Oude* pp 1-6.

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Dr Ethe Rudagī's *Vorläufer und Zeitgenossen* (in the *Morgenländische Forschungen* for 1873) pp 36-38 also the article on *Modern Persian Literature* by the same scholar in vol II of Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie* p 218.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. A de Biberstein Kazimirski *Menoutchehri* pp 8-9.

certainly merit little more credence than the assertion of serious and careful Arab writers, like Tabarí (†A.D. 923), and Mas'údí (†A.D. 957), that the first poem ever written was an elegy composed in Syriac by Adam on the death of Abel, of which poem they even give an Arabic metrical rendering<sup>1</sup> to this effect.

"The lands are changed and those who dwell upon them,  
The face of earth is marred and girt with gloom,  
All that was fair and fragrant now hath faded,  
Gone from that comely face the joyous bloom  
Alas for my dear son, alas for Abel,  
A victim murdered, thrust within the tomb!  
How can we rest? That Fiend accursed, unfailing,  
Undying, ever at our side doth loom!"

To which the Devil is alleged to have retorted thus:

"Renounce these lands and those who dwell upon them!  
By me was cramped in Paradise thy room,  
Wherein thy wife and thou were set and stablished,  
Thy heart unheeding of the world's dark doom!  
Yet did'st thou not escape my snares and scheming,  
Till that great gift on which thou did'st presume  
Was lost to thee, and blasts of wind from Eden,  
But for God's grace, had swept thee like a broom!"

Nevertheless there is one legend indicating the existence of Persian poetry even in Sásánian times which, partly from the persistency with which it reappears in various old writers of credit,<sup>2</sup> partly from a difference in the form of the minstrel's name which can hardly be explained save on the assumption that both forms

Barbad the  
Sasanian minstrel  
(A.D. 590-627)

<sup>1</sup> Tabarí, vol 1, p 146, Mas'údí, *Mu'inn'dh-Dhahab* (ed Barbier de Meynard), vol 1, pp 65-67, Tha'alibí, *Qisasul-Anbiyá* (ed Cairo, A.H. 1306), pp 29-30, Dawlatsháh (ed Browne), p 20

<sup>2</sup> Amongst Arabic writers, the earliest mention of Bahlabad which I have found is made in a poem by Khalid b Fayyád (circ A.D. 718), cited by Hamadhání, Yáqút and Qazwíní, and translated at pp 59-60 of the *J R A S* for January, 1899. Accounts, more or less detailed, are given of

were transcribed from a Pahlawī original, appears to me worthy of more serious attention. According to this legend, one of the chief ornaments of the court of Khusraw Parwīz, the Sāsānian king (A D 590-627), was a minstrel named by Persian writers *Bārbad*, but by Arabic authors Bahlabad, Balahbad or Fahlabad, forms of which the first and third point to a Persian original Pahlapat Bahlabad and Bārbad when written in the Arabic character are not easily confounded, but if written in the Pahlawī character, which has but one sign for A and H on the one hand, and for R and L on the other, they are identical, which fact affords strong evidence that the legends concerning this singer go back ultimately to books written in Pahlawī, in other words to records almost contemporary. Now this Barbad (for simplicity the modern Persian form of the name is adopted here, save in citations from Arabic texts) presents, as I have elsewhere pointed out,\* a striking resemblance to the Samanid poet Rudagī, who flourished in the early part of the tenth century

him by Ibn Qutayba († A D 889) in his *Uṣūn al-aḥbār* (MS of St. Petersburg Asiatic Museum No 691) al Jahīdh († A D 869) in his *Kutub al Hayawan* (Cambridge MS Qq 224) Hamadhamī (circ A D 903) ed de Goeje the author of the *Kutub al Mahāsīn wal Addad* (ed Van Vloten pp 363-64) probably al Bayhaqī (circ. A D 925) Ibn Abd Rabbihi († A D 940) vol i p 192 or 188 of another edition Abul Faraj al Isfahānī († A D 957) in the *Kutub al Aghānī* Yaqut († A D 1229) vol iii pp 230 *et seqq* and al Qazwīnī († A D 1283) in his *Āthar al Bilād* (pp 154-55 -30-231 95- 97) Of Persian writers who allude to him we may mention Sharif i Mujallidī (date uncertain cited by Nidhamī i Arudī i Samarqandī in the *Chahar Maqāla*) Firdawsi († circ A D 415) in the *Shāhnāma* Nidhamī of Ganja († circ A D 103) in his *Khusraw wa Shirin* and the other Nidhamī above cited († circ A D 1160) Muhammad Awfi (circ A D 128) and Hamdu llah Mustawfi of Qazwin (circ A D 1340) in the *Tārīkh i Guzda*. I am indebted to Baron V Rosen of St Petersburg for calling my attention to several of the above references which I had overlooked when writing the article referred to in the next note.

See my article in the *J R A S* for January 1899 (pp 37-69) on *The Sources of Dawlatshāh with some remarks on the Materials available for a Literary History of Persia and an Excursus on Barbad and Rudagī*

of our era, and indeed the two are already associated by an early poet, Sharíf-i-Mujallidí of Gurgán, who sings:

"From all the treasures hoarded by the Houses  
Of Sásán and of Sámán, in our days  
Nothing survives except the song of Bábad,  
Nothing is left save Rúdagí's sweet lays"

For in all the accounts of Rúdagí which we possess his most remarkable achievement is the song which he composed and sung in the presence of the Sámánid Amír Nasir Ahmad to induce that Prince to abandon the charms of Herát and its environs, and to return to his native Bukhárá, which he had neglected for four years. The extreme simplicity of this song and its entire lack of rhetorical adornment, have been noticed by most of those who have described this incident, by some (e.g. Nidhámí-i-'Arúdí of Samarqand) with approval, by others, such as Dawlatsháh, with disapprobation, mixed with surprise that words so simple could produce so powerful an effect. And indeed it is rather a ballad than a formal poem of the artificial and rather stilted type most admired in those decadent days to which Dawlatsháh belongs, and in which, as he says, "If any one were to produce such a poem in the presence of kings or nobles, it would meet with the reprobation of all." To the musical skill of the minstrel, and his cunning on the harp wherewith he accompanied his singing, the simple ballad, of which a paraphrase is here offered, no doubt owed much

"The Jú-yi-Múhyán we call to mind,  
We long for those dear friends long left behind  
The sands of Oxus, toilsome though they be,  
Beneath my feet were soft as silk to me  
Glad at the friends' return, the Oxus deep  
Up to our girths in laughing waves shall leap  
Long live Bukhárá! Be thou of good cheer!  
Joyous towards thee hasteth our Amír!  
The Moon's the Prince, Bukhárá is the sky,  
O Sky, the Moon shall light thee by and by!  
Bukhará is the Mead, the Cypress he,  
Receive at last, O Mead, thy Cypress-tree!"

When Rudagī reached this verse adds the oldest authority for this narrative (Nidhamī : Arudī of Samārqand) the Amīr was so much affected that he descended from his throne bestrode the horse of the sentinel on duty and set off for Bukhara in such haste that they carried his riding boots after him for two parasangs as far as Buruna where he put them on neither did he draw rein anywhere till he reached Bukhara and Rudagī received from the army the double of that five thousand dinars [which they had promised him in the event of his success]

Thus Rudagī was as much harper, ballad singer, and improvisatore as poet, resembling, probably, the minstrels whose *tasnifs*, or topical ballads, may be heard to-day at any Persian entertainment of which music and singing form a part resembling also, as has been pointed out, that dimly visible Barbad or Bahlabad of the old Sasanian days Of the ten men reckoned by the Persians incomparable each in his own way, he was one, and herein lay his special virtue and merit, that when aught must be made known to King Khusraw Parwīz which none other dared utter for terror of the royal displeasure, Barbad would weave it dexterously into a song, and sing it before the king Parwīz had a horse called Shabdīz, beautiful and intelligent beyond all others, and so greatly did the king love Shabdīz that he swore to slay that man who should bring the tidings of his death So when Shabdīz died, the Master of the Horse prayed Bahlabad to make it known to the king in a song, of which Parwīz listening divined the purport and cried, "Woe unto thee! Shabdīz is dead!" "It is the king who sayeth it," replied the minstrel and so escaped the threatened death and made the king's oath of no effect) Thus is the tale told by the Arab poet, Khālid b Fayyad, who lived little more than a century after Khusraw Parwīz —

And I husraw king of kings him too an arrow  
Plumed from the wings of Death did sorely smite  
E'en as he slept in Shirin's soft embraces  
Amidst brocades and perfumes through the night  
Dreaming of Shabdīz whom he used to ride,  
His noble steed his glory and his pride.

He with an oath most solemn and most binding,  
 Not to be loosed, had sworn upon the Fire  
 That whoso first should say, 'Shabdíz hath perished,'  
 Should die upon the cross in torments due,  
     Until one morn that horse lay low in death  
 Like whom no horse hath been since man drew breath

Four strings wailed o'er him, while the minstrel kindled  
 Pity and passion by the witchery  
 Of his left hand, and, while the strings vibrated,  
 Chanted a wailing Persian threnody,  
     Till the King cried, 'My horse Shabdíz is dead !'  
     'It is the King that sayeth it,' they said "

Other minstrels of this old time are mentioned, whose names alone are preserved to us. Áfarín, Khusrawání, Mádhavástání,<sup>1</sup> and the harper Sakísá,<sup>2</sup> beings yet more shadowy than Bárbad, of whose notes not so much as an echo has reached our time. Yet can we hardly doubt that those old Sásánian halls and palaces lacked not this ornament of song, whereof some reflex at least passed over into Muhammadan times. For though the modern Persian prosody be modelled on that of the Arabs, there are types of verse notably the quatrain (*rubá'i*) and the narrative poem in doublets (*mathnawí*) which are to all appearance indigenous. Whether, as Darmesteter seems to think,<sup>3</sup> there is sufficient evidence to warrant us in believing that romantic poetry existed in Persia even in Achæmenian times is too problematical a question to be discussed in this place.

Hitherto we have considered only the history of the Persian language and the Persian power in the narrower sense of the term. We have now to extend the field of inquiry so as to include the whole Íránian people and their literary remains. The ground on which we

Wider view of  
 the Iranian  
 people.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Bayhaqí's *Kitábun'l-Mahásin* (ed. Van Vloten), p. 363.

<sup>2</sup> Nidhámí of Ganja's *Khusraw wa Shírin*

<sup>3</sup> Darmesteter's *Origines de la Poésie Persane* (Paris, 1887), p. 2.

now enter is, unfortunately, much less sure than that which we have hitherto traversed, the problems which we shall encounter are far more complicated, and their solutions are, in many cases, uncertain and conjectural

✓ The oldest Persian dynasty, the Achæmenian, with which we began our retrospect of Persian history, rose by the fall of a power not less famous than itself, that of  
 The Medes. the Medes, whom from our earliest days we are accustomed to associate with the Persians. In the modern sense of the term, indeed, they were Persians, but of the West, not of the South, having their centre and capital at Ecbatana (*Hagmatana* of the Old Persian inscriptions, now *Hamadân*), not at Persepolis (Sasanian *Istakhr*, near *Shiraz*, the present chief town of Fârs). The actual boundaries of Media cannot be precisely defined, but, roughly speaking, it extended from the Mountains of Ázarbáyjân (Atropatene) on the north to Susiana (Khuzistân) on the south, and from the Zagros Mountains on the east to about the line of the modern Tíhrân-Isfahán road, with a north eastern prolongation including the whole or part of Mázandarán. In modern phraseology, therefore, it comprised Kurdistan, Luristan the northern part of Khuzistân, the western part of 'Irâq, 'Ajámí, and the southern part of Ázarbáyjân. Amongst the hardy mountaineers of this wide region arose the Medic power. The name of Media does not, like that of Persia, still survive in the land to which it originally belonged, but, as has been shown by de Lagarde and Olshausen, it continued, even in Muhammadan times, under the form *Mah* (Old Persian *Máda*) to enter into certain place names, such as *Máh Kufa*, *Mah Basra*, *Máh Nahawand* &c.

Already however in A.D. 1700 the celebrated Cambridge scholar and pupil of Abraham Wheelock Dr. Hyde, who in later life became attached to the University of Oxford as Professor of Hebrew, Laudian Professor of Arabic and keeper of the Bodleian Library, had recognised the identity of *Máh* with *Máda* (see *Vet. Pers. Relig. Hist.* ed. 1760 p. 424).

The Medes, unfortunately, unlike the Persians, have left no records of their achievements, and we are consequently dependent for information concerning them on the records of other nations who had direct or indirect knowledge of them, notably the Assyrian, Jews, and Greeks. As regards the Assyrian records, Amadân (Hamadân), the capital of the Medes, is mentioned in an inscription of Tiglath Pileser (circ. B.C. 1100) as a subject territory<sup>1</sup>; and it is again mentioned in an inscription of the ninth century before Christ. Salmonassar-Sargon (B.C. 731-713) boasts that he had made his name feared in distant Media, and the same region is referred to by his successor Sennacherib, and by Esar-haddon (B.C. 680-669). In 2 Kings xvii, 6 we read that "in the ninth year of Hoshea" (B.C. 722) "the King of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes," and this statement is repeated in verse 11 of the next chapter.<sup>2</sup>

Of the three Greek historians whose works are primary sources for this period, *Herodotus* merits the first mention, both on account of his veracity (to which the cuneiform inscriptions bear abundant testimony) and because his history alone of the three is preserved to us in its entirety. *Ctesias*, who flourished in the fifth century before Christ, was physician to Artaxerxes Mnemon, and professed to derive his information from the Persian royal archives. This statement at least affords evidence of the existence of such documents, which are also referred to in the Book of Esther, where we read (chap. vi, 1) that King Ahasuerus, being unable to sleep, "commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles," and (chap. ii, 23) that the plot against the king's life devised by Bigthan and Teresh

Spiegel, *Einäische Alterthumskunde*, ii, 246

<sup>2</sup> Noldeke, *Aufsätze zur Persischen Geschichte* (Leipzig, 1887), p. 5.

and disclosed by Mordecai "was written in the book of the chronicles before the King. Whether because Ctesias imperfectly understood or deliberately misrepresented these records, or because the records themselves were falsified (a thing which modern analogies render conceivable), the prevailing view is that little reliance can be placed on his narrative, which, moreover, is only preserved to us in a

**Berosus.** fragmentary condition by much later writers, such as Photius (A D 820-891). *Berosus* was a

Chaldæan priest who lived in the time of Alexander the Great and his immediate successors, and translated into Greek, for his patron Antiochus of Syria, the records of his country. Of his work also fragments only are preserved to us by later writers, Polyhistor and Apollodorus (first century before Christ), who are cited by Eusebius and Syncellus.

The Medes, according to Herodotus, were the first of the peoples subject to Assyria who succeeded in securing their independence, after they had borne the yoke for 520 years.

**Deioces.** This took place about B C 700, and a year

or two later Deioces (*Δηιοκης*), the first of the four Mede kings mentioned by Herodotus, established himself on the throne. An Assyrian record of B C 715 mentions a *Dayaukku* (= Deioces) who had been led away

**Phraortes.** captive and in B C 713 King Sargon of

Assyria subdued the *Bit Dayaukku*, or "Land of Deioces." Phraortes (Fravartish in the Old Persian inscriptions) succeeded in B C 647, and extended his rule over the Persians

**Cyaxares.** as well as his own countrymen, the Medes. He in turn was succeeded in B C 625 by

Cyaxares (Huvakhshatara), who, in conjunction with the Babylonian king, destroyed Nineveh in B C 607, and concluded peace with the Lydians in B C 585, in consequence of a total eclipse of the sun which took place on May 28th of that year, and which was regarded by both sides as an indication of Divine displeasure. In the same year, probably,

he died, and was followed by his son Astyages, who was  
 Astyages overthrown by Cyrus the Achæmenian in B.C.  
 550, when the power passed from the West-  
 Irânian Medes to the South-Irânian Persians.

With the exploits of the Medes, however, we are not here concerned. The two questions in connection with them which are of importance from our present point of view are first, what was their language? second, what was their religion?

It has been hitherto assumed, in accordance with the most prevalent, and, in the opinion of the writer, the most probable view, that the Medes were an Irânian  
 The language of the Medes race speaking an Irânian language closely akin to Old Persian. This is the view taken, for instance, by Noldeke, who, in concluding his account of the Medic Empire, says :—

"Perhaps careful examinations of the neighbourhood of Hamadân, or excavations, may still some day bring to light other traces of that ancient time. It would be of the greatest value if inscriptions of the Medic kings should chance to be found, I should conjecture that these, both in language and script, would be quite similar to those of the Persian kings."

Darmesteter, whose views will be discussed at greater length presently, goes further, and declares that the language of the Avesta, the so-called Zend language, is the language of Media, the Medic tongue.

"La conclusion qui s'impose," says he,<sup>2</sup> after adducing evidence in favour of his view, "c'est que la tradition persie et l'Avesta, confirmés par des témoignages étrangers, voient le centre et le

<sup>1</sup> *Aufsätze zur Persisch Gesch.* (Leipzig, 1887), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Darmesteter, *Études Iraniques*, vol. 1, pp. 12, 13. M. de Hailez (*Manuel de la Langue de l'Avesta*, 1882, pp. 21, and *Introduction à l'étude de l'Avesta et de la religion Mazdénne*, 1881, pp. xlv. et seqq.) takes the same view. "Nous croyons avoir démontré que l'Avesta doit être attribué à la Médie, que sa langue était celle des Mages. Toutefois, comme cette opinion n'est point encore universellement admise, nous préférons employer, à l'exemple des Parses, le terme 'Avestique' exempt certainement de tout erreur. Le mot 'Zend' même est préférable à 'Vieux-Bactrien,' parce que c'est un terme de convention dont l'emploi ne préjuge rien."

berceau du Zoroastrisme soit en Atropatène soit à Rai dans l'un et l'autre cas en Médie. Je crois que les droits de l'Atropatène sont mieux établis et que c'est de là que le Zoroastrisme a pris sa course de l'Ouest à l'Est. En tout cas *le Zoroastrisme est une chose médique et l'Avesta est l'œuvre des prêtres mèdes*. Il suit par le témoignage externe des classiques joint au témoignage intrinsèque des livres zends et de la tradition native que l'Avesta est l'œuvre des Mages que *le zend est la langue de la Médie ancienne* et que l'on aurait le droit de remplacer le nom impropre de *langue ende* par le terme de *langue médique*.

(A totally different view, which ought not to pass unnoticed, is held by Oppert, and set forth at length in his work *Le Peuple et la Langue des Mèdes*. The inscriptions of the Achæmenian kings, as is well known, are drawn up in three different languages, of which the first is Old Persian and the third Assyrian.

Oppert vi w  
that th Medes  
were Turanian  
race.

As to the second, concerning the nature of which much doubt has prevailed, M. Oppert holds that it is Médic, and that it is not an Aryan but a Turanian tongue, which astonishing opinion he supports by many ingenious arguments. The very name of Media (*Mâda*) he explains by a Sumerian word *mada*, meaning "country", and the names of the Médic kings given by Ctesias he regards as the Aryan equivalents of the Aryanized Turanian names given by Herodotus and in the Old Persian inscriptions. Thus, for instance, in his view, the name of the first Médic king of Herodotus was compounded of *dâya* (other) and *ukku* (law), the Aryanized or Persianized form of which was probably *Dahyuka*, "le réunisseur des pays" while the Persian translation of the same was the form given by Ctesias, *Ἀρταός*, which "recalls to us the Persian *Artayu*, from *arta*, 'law, and *dju*, 'reuniting'. Of the six tribes of the Medes mentioned by Herodotus (bk. 1, ch. 61), Oppert admits that the names are Aryan, but he contends that in the case of two at least, the *Βουσαι* and the *Στρουγάρης*, we have to do with Aryan translations of the original names, which he believes

to have been Túránian, and to have denoted respectively "autochthones" and "vivant dans les tentes"

There are but very few scholars who are qualified to re-survey the ground traversed by M. Oppert and to form an independent judgment of his results in matters of detail, but, as regards his general conclusions, we concur with Darmesteter in the summary statement of objections to M. Oppert's theory wherewith he closes his review of the book in question <sup>1</sup>

"Nous ne voyons donc pas de raison suffisante pour abandonner l'opinion traditionnelle, que la langue des Mèdes était une langue aryenne, opinion qui a pour elle, en somme, le témoignage direct de Strabon, et le témoignage indirect d'Hérodote, sans parler des raisons très fortes qui font de la Médie le lieu d'origine du Zend Avesta et par suite la patrie du zend"

In the absence of further discoveries, the theory that the Medes were an Íránian people speaking an Íránian language closely akin to Old Persian is the view which we must continue to regard as most probable

It has already been said that the Medic kings, unlike the Achæmenians, left no records of their achievements, while, as regards their language, some scholars, like Noldeke, think that, though specimens of it may be brought to light by future discoveries, none are at present accessible, others, like Oppert, find such specimens in the cuneiform inscriptions of the second class, while others, like Darmesteter, believe that we possess in the ancient scriptures of the Zoroastrians, the Zend-Avesta, an ample specimen not only of the language, but also of the literature, of the Medes. That the language of the Avesta is an Íránian language, standing to Old Persian in the relation of sister, not of daughter or mother, is proved beyond all reasonable doubt. As to the part of Írán where it flourished, there is not, however, the

<sup>1</sup> *Études Iramennes*, II, p. 14, reprinted from the *Revue Critique* for June 21, 1880

same unanimity for while Darmesteter, as we have seen, regards it as the language of Media, the opinion prevalent in Germany is that it was the language of Bactria, and it has even become fashionable to speak of it as "Old Bactrian" and "East Iranian". Darmesteter, in his usual clear and concise way, sums up the arguments of the East Iranian or Bactrian theory before proceeding to refute them, as follows\* —

(1) Zend is not the language of Persia

( ) It is in Bactria that according to tradition Zoroaster made his first important conquest King Gushtasp

(3) The geography of the Avesta only knows the east of Iran

The first fact he continues is correct but purely negative it excludes Persia [*i.e.* Persis proper] from the question but leaves free all the rest of Iran

The second fact is correct but only proves that Bactria plays a great part in the religious Epic of Zoroastrianism the struggles maintained by the Iranians against the idolatrous Turanians of which Bactria by its geographical position was the natural theatre must necessarily have drawn the thoughts of the faithful to this part of Iran where the worshippers of Ahura Mazda were at death grips with the worshippers of the *dætiās* and which formed the frontier post of Ormazd against barbarous idolatry it is even very probable that the legends concerning the conversion of Bactria and of King Gushtasp bequeath to us a historic recollection of the conquests of Zoroastrianism in the East. Nowhere however is Bactria represented as the cradle of Zoroaster and Zoroastrianism. Parsi tradition is unanimous and consistent in placing this cradle not in the East in Bactria but in the West in Atropatene and not only Parsi tradition but the Avesta itself for—

The third fact adduced is incorrect the Avesta knows the North and West of Iran as well as the East the first chapter of the Vendidad which describes Iran as it was known to the authors of the Vendidad opens the enumeration of the Iranian regions by the *Eran Vy* washed by the Good Daitya (I 3) now the *Eran Vy* is on the borders of Atropatene and the Good Daitya is the Araxes. It is equally familiar with the North for it cites Rhagæ the *Paya* of the Greeks the Ray of the moderns in Media

*Etudes Iraniennes* vol 1 pp 10-1

This view is by no means universally admitted Geiger for instance places the *Aryana Va ja* or *Eran Vy* in the region of the Pamirs

One piece of philological evidence is adduced by Darmesteter in support of his opinion that the language of the Avesta is the language of the Medes. The modern Persian word for dog, *sag*, implies, says he,<sup>1</sup> the existence of an Old Persian form *sala* (not actually occurring in the meagre documents on which we depend for our direct knowledge of the ancient language of Páris). Herodotus, however, mentions (I, 110) that in the language of the Medes the dog was called σπάλα, which rather resembles the Avestic word *span* (Sanskrit *śvan*, Greek κύων). And it is curious that this word, in the form *ispa*, still exists<sup>2</sup> in some of the Persian dialects, such as those of Qohrúd (near Káshán) and Natanz.

M. Clément Huart, who has contributed to the *Journal Asiatique*<sup>3</sup> a number of very ingenious and interesting papers on various Persian dialects, such as those of Yazd, Síwand, and the curious *ʔáwídn-i-Kabír* (the principal work of the heretical Hurúfí sect,<sup>4</sup> which arose in Persia in the fifteenth century of our era), has still further developed Darmesteter's views, and has endeavoured to show that several of the dialects spoken in remote and mountainous places in Persia (especially in the West, *i.e.*, in Media) are descended from the language of the Avesta; and to these dialects he proposes to apply the term "Modern Medic," or

Huart's development of Darmesteter's view

According to his interpretation of the data contained in ch 1 of the Vendidad, the most western regions known to the Avesta are *Vchikána* (Hyrcania, the modern Gorgan or Jurjan), *Rangha* (Rhagæ, or Ray, near Tíhrán, the modern capital), and *Vaena* "the four-cornered," corresponding, according to his view, to the eastern portion of Mazandaran.

<sup>1</sup> Loc cit, p 13

<sup>2</sup> Cf my *Year amongst the Persians*, p 189, Polak's *Persien*, vol 1, p 265

<sup>3</sup> *J A* for 1885, vol vi, pp 502-545, *les Quatrains de Bábd Tahir*, *ibid* for 1888, vol vi, pp 298-302, *Note sur le prétendu Dérí des Páris des Yazd*, *ibid* 1889, iv, pp 238-270, *Notice d'un manuscrit Pehlvi-Musulman*, *ibid* 1893, vol 1, pp 241-265, *Le Dialecte Persan de Síwénd*

<sup>4</sup> See my article on the *Literature and Doctrines of the Hurúfí Sect* in the *J R A S* for January, 1898, pp 61-94

"Pehlevi Musulman" : He remarks that, amongst other differences, the root *kar* underlies the whole verb which signifies "to do, "to make," in the Avestic language while in Old Persian the aorist, or imperative, stem of this verb (as in Modern Persian) is *kun*, and again that the root signifying "to speak," "to say," in Avestic is *aoj*, *vach*, while in Old Persian it is *gaub*. Now while in Modern Persian (which, as we have seen, is the lineal descendant of Old Persian) the verbs signifying "to do, "to say, are *kardan* (imperative *kun*) and *guyan* (imperative *gu*, *guy*), in those dialects which he calls "Modern Medic" the stem *kar-* is preserved throughout (aorist *karam* instead of *kunam*, &c.), and words denoting "speech, "to speak, are derived from a root *vdj-* or some similar basis corresponding to the Avestic *aoj*, *vach-*. This test is employed by M. Huart in classifying a given dialect as "Medic" or "Persian". According to this ingenious theory the language of the Avesta is still represented in Persia by a number of dialects, such as those used in the quatrains of Bábá Táhir (beginning of the eleventh century), in the *Šáwīdān* : *Kabir* (fifteenth century), and, at the present day, in the districts of Qohrud and Siwand, and amongst the Zoroastrians of Yazd and Kirmán. It is also to be noted that the word for "I" in the Tálísh dialect is, according to Beresine, *az*, which appears to be a survival of the Avestic *azem* (Old Persian *adam*). It is to be expected that a fuller and more exhaustive study of the dialects still spoken in various parts of Persia (which, notwithstanding the rich materials collected, and in part published, by Zhukovski,<sup>3</sup> are still inadequately known to us) will throw more light on this question. Darmesteter, however, in another work (*Chansons*

They are in fact commonly called Pahlwí by the Persians and were so as early as the fourteenth century of our era—*eg* by Hamdu llah Musawwí of Qazwín. Cf Polak *loc cit*.

*Recherches sur les Dialectes Persans* I azan 1853 pp 31 *et seqq*

<sup>3</sup> *Materialy dld i uchenna Per idskikh Narechij* part 1 (Dialects of Kashan Vanishun Qohrud Keshe and Zefre) St Petersburg 1888

*populaire des Afghans*, pp lxii-lxv), has endeavoured to show that the Pashtô or Pakhtô language of Afghanistan represents the chief surviving descendant of the old Avestic tongue, which theory seems to militate against the view set forth in his *Études Iraniennes*. It is possible, however, that the two are really compatible; that Zoroaster, of the Medic tribe of the Magians (Magush), brought his doctrine from Atropatene (Ázarbayjân) in the extreme north-west of Írán to Bactria in the extreme north-east, where he achieved his first signal success by converting King Vishtâspa (Gushtâsp); that the dialects of Atropatene and Bactria, and, indeed, of all North Írán, were very similar, and that in the Avesta, as suggested by De Harlez, the so-called Gáthá dialect represents the latter, and the ordinary Avestic of the Vendidad the former. All this, however, is mere conjecture, which at best can only be regarded as a plausible hypothesis

It is not less difficult to speak with certainty as to the religion of the Medes than as to their language, nay, in spite of their numerous inscriptions it has not yet been decided whether or no the Achæmænians who succeeded them did or did not hold the faith of Zoroaster, as to whose personality, date, and native land likewise the most various opinions have been emitted. By some the very existence of a historical Zoroaster has been denied, by others his personality has been found clearly and sharply revealed in the Gáthás, which they hold to be, if not his actual utterances, at least the words of his immediate disciples. By some his date has been fixed in the Vedic period 1,800, 2,000, even 6,000 years before Christ, while by others he is placed in the seventh century B C. By some he is, as we have seen, regarded as of Bactria, in the extreme north-east of Persia, by others of Atropatene, in the extreme north-west. So too with the Avesta, the sacred scripture of his adherents, which Darmesteter in his *Traduction nouvelle* (*Annales du Musée Guimet*, vols xxi-xxiv,

Religion of the  
ancient  
Íranians—  
Zoroaster

Paris, 1892-3) has striven to drag down—at least in part—from a remote antiquity even into post Christian times. Not only has opinion varied thus widely feeling has run high nay, in the opinion of that eminent scholar and courageous traveller, M Halcy, expressed in conversation with the writer, the calm domain of Science has been invaded by racial prejudices and national antipathies. We had been discussing the views set forth in Darmesteter's work above mentioned, at that time just published and I had expressed surprise at the very recent date therein assigned to the Avesta, and inquired whether those numerous and eminent scholars who maintained its great antiquity had no reason for their assertion. "Reason enough," was the answer, "their hatred of the Semitic races, their pride in their Aryan descent. Loath to accord to the Jews any priority or excellence over the Aryan peoples, they belittle Moses to glorify Zoroaster, and with one hand drag down the Pentateuch while with the other they raise up the Avesta!" Sad enough, if true, that this accursed racial feeling, responsible for so many crimes, should not leave unmolested even these high levels where passion should have no place!

To enter these lists is not for those who, like the writer, have devoted themselves to the literature and thought of Muhammadan times, a field sufficiently vast and sufficiently unexplored to satisfy the most ambitious and the most industrious. preferable, moreover, in this, that here we stand on firm historic ground, and deal not with dates which oscillate over centuries and scenes which swing from Bactria to Atropatene. Yet all honour to those who so courageously labour in those arid fields of a remote antiquity, striving with infinite toil and tact to bring history out of legend, and order out of chaos! From such must we needs choose a guide in forming our views about that time and those events which, though strongly appealing to our curiosity, lie beyond the range of our own studies. Sanest and skilfullest of such guides, trained in

the profundity of the German school, yet gifted with something of that clearness as to the issues and alternatives of every question which gives so great a charm to French science, and adding to these that combination of fairness and decision with which we are wont to credit the Anglo-Saxon genius, is Professor A. V. Williams Jackson of Columbia University, New York. In a series of admirable papers published in the *Proceedings of the American Oriental Society*, the *American Journal of Philology*, &c, he has successively dealt with most of the difficult questions above alluded to, and with many other points connected with the history and doctrine of Zoroastrianism; and has finally summed up his views in a work, at once most scholarly and most readable, entitled *Zoroaster, the Prophet of Ancient Írán* (New York, 1899). His principal conclusions are as follows

1 That Zoroaster was a perfectly historical personage, a member of the Median tribe of the Magi

Professor  
Williams Jackson's  
conclusions

2 That he flourished about the middle of the seventh century before Christ—that is, during the dominion of the Medes and before the rise of the Achæmenian power—and died about B.C. 583, aged 77

3 That he was a native of Western Persia (Atropatene or Media), but that his first notable success was gained in Bactria (Balkh), where he succeeded in converting King Vishtáspa (Gushtásp)

4 That the Gathás (admittedly the oldest portion of the Avesta) reflect with fidelity the substance of his original preaching in Balkh

5 That from Bactria the religion of Zoroaster spread rapidly throughout Persia, and was dominant in Párs (Persis proper) under the later Achæmenians, but that the date of its introduction into this part of Írán and its adoption by the people and rulers of Párs is uncertain

Though these conclusions are not universally accepted, the evidence, in the opinion of the writer, is strongly in their favour, more particularly the evidence of native tradition in the period immediately succeeding the Muhammadan Conquest, which is derived mainly from the tradition current in

Sásánian times And it may be remarked that since it is not the habit of writers of this class to understate facts, it

Reas n bl ess  
f th  
l is ns.  
appears unlikely that they should concur in assign-  
ing to Zoroaster too modern a date As regards  
the Medic origin of Zoroastrianism, Geiger, who

is in full accord with both Darmesteter and Jackson on this point, remarks that though the language of the Avesta belongs, in his opinion, to the north east of Persia (Bactria), the doctrines were, as all Parsi tradition indicates, introduced there by Medic *dthravans*, or fire priests, these *athravans* being uniformly represented as wanderers and missionaries in the north east, whose home was in Ragha (Ray) and Media Darmesteter,<sup>1</sup> in this connection, has called attention to the interesting fact that the word *Moghu* (from which we get "Magian")

A few worthy  
use of the term  
Magia in the  
Avesta.  
only occurs in one passage in the Avesta (Yasna  
xliv, 25), in the compound *Môghatbîsh*, "a hater"  
or "injurer of the Magi", for it was as Magi of

Medic race, not as *dthravans* of Zoroastrian faith, that they were exposed to the hatred and jealousy of the Persians proper, whose power succeeded that of the Medes, and whose supremacy was threatened from time to time in early Achæmenian days by Medic insurrections, notably by that of

Th Pseudo-  
Sm rd s.  
Gaumâta the Magian (*Magush*), the impersonator  
of Bardiya (Smerdes) the son of Cyrus, whom

Darius slew, as he himself relates in his inscription at Behistun in the following words —

Says Darius the King Thereafter was a man a Magian Gaumata by name from Pisiyaavada did he arise from a mountain there named Arakadris In the month of Viyakhna on the fourteenth day then was it that he rose Thus did he deceive the people [saying]

I am Bardiya son of Cyrus (*Kuru*) brother of Cambyses (*Kambu* *niya*) Thereupon all the people revolted against Cambyses they went over to him both Persia and Media and likewise the other

provinces He seized the Throne in the month of Garmapada, on the ninth day, then was it that he seized the Throne Thereupon Cambyses died, slain by his own hand.

"Says Darius the King This Throne which Gaumâta the Magian took away from Cambyses, this Throne was from of old in our Family

Citation from  
the inscription  
of Darius So Gaumâta the Magian took away from Cambyses both Persia and Media and the other provinces, he appropriated them to himself, he was king.

"Says Darius the King There was no one, neither Persian, nor Mede, nor any one of our family, who could wrest the kingdom from this Gaumâta the Magian the people feared him, for many people did Bardiya slay who had known him formerly for this cause did he slay the people, 'lest they should recognise me [and know] that I am not Bardiya the son of Cyrus' None dared say aught concerning Gaumâta the Magian until I came Then I called on Ahuramazda for help Ahuramazda brought me help in the month of Bâgayâdish, on the tenth day, then it was that I with a few men slew that Gaumâta the Magian, and those who were the foremost of his followers In Media is a fortress named Çikathauvatish, in the district named Niçâya there slew I him I took from him the kingdom, by the Grace of Ahuramazda I became King, Ahuramazda gave to me the kingdom

"Says Darius the King The kingdom which had been alienated from our house, that I restored in its place did I establish it as [it was] before, so I made it the temples which Gaumâta the Magian overthrew I restored to the people, the markets, and the flocks, and the dwellings according to clans which Gaumâta the Magian had taken away from them I established the people in their [former] places, Persia, Media, and the other provinces Thus did I restore that which had been taken away as it was before by the Grace of Ahuramazda have I done this, I laboured until I restored this our clan to its position as it was before, so, by the Grace of Ahuramazda, did I restore our clan as [it was] when Gaumâta the Magian had not eaten it up

"Says Darius the King This is what I did when I became king"

Of the nine rebel kings whom, in nineteen battles, Darius defeated and took captive, Gaumata the Magian, who "made Persia (Pârs) revolt," was the first but not the only Mede Fravartish (Phraortes), who "made Media revolt," and was taken prisoner at Ray, mutilated, and finally crucified at Hamadân (Ecbatana, the old Medic capital), claimed to be "of

the race of Huvakhshatara (Cyaxares, the third Median king of Herodotus), and so did Chitritakhma, who rebelled in Sagartia, and was crucified at Arbil (Arbira). We find, Other Medians pretensions expressed by Darius. it is true, Median generals and soldiers fighting loyally for Darius, but nevertheless between the Mede and the Persian at this time such antagonism must have existed as between Scotch and English in the days of the Edwards. Almost the same in race and language—*ομογλωττοι παρα μικρον*—and probably the same in religion, the jealousy between Mede and Persian was at this time a powerful factor in history, and, as Darmesteter says, the Magian priest of Media, though respected and feared in his priestly capacity, and even held indispensable for the proper celebration of religious rites, was none the less liable to the hatred and enmity of the southern Persian.

As it is the aim of this book to trace the developments of post Muhammadan literature and thought in Persia, or in other words the literary history of the last thousand years, with only such reference to earlier times as is requisite for a proper understanding of this subject, a more detailed discussion of the ancient times of which we have been speaking would be out of place. In this chapter we have gone back to the beginning of the Median power (about B.C. 700), at which point the historical period may be said to commence—but it is possible to distinguish, in the dim light of antiquity, still earlier periods, as has been done by Spiegel in his excellent *Erânische Alterthumskunde* (3 vols., Leipzig, 1871-78). (Putting aside the vexed question of an original Aryan race spreading outwards in all directions from a common centre, it at least seems pretty certain that the Indians and Persians were once united in a common Indo-Iranian race located somewhere in the Panjab.) The pretty theory as to the causes which led to the cleavage of this community which was so ingeniously advanced by Max Müller<sup>1</sup>

See Max Müller's *Selected Essays* (London 1881) vol. II pp. 13-134

is, I believe, generally abandoned, but it is so attractive that it seems a pity to pass it over.

Briefly stated, this theory hinges upon the occurrence in the Vedas of the Hindús and the Avesta of the Zoroastrians of certain theological terms, which, though identical as regards etymology, are here diametrically opposed. *Deva* in Sanskrit means "bright," and he *Devas*, or "Bright ones," are the Hindú gods. In the Avesta, on the other hand, the *daévas* (Modern Persian *dlv*) are devils, and the Zoroastrian, in his confession of faith, solemnly declares. "I cease to be a worshipper of the *daévas*," he renounces these *daévas*, *devas*, or Hindú gods, and becomes the servant of *Ahura Mazda*. Now it is a phonetic law that Persian *h* corresponds to Sanskrit *s* (e.g., Hind, whence we get our name for India, represents Sind, that being naturally the part of India best known to the Persians), so the *Ahura* of the Avesta is equivalent to *asura* in Sanskrit, which means an evil spirit or devil. And so, from these two little words, Max Muller conjures up a most convincing picture of Zoroaster, the reformer and prophet, rising up amongst the still united Indo-Iránian community to protest against the degradation of a polytheistic nature-worship which had gradually replaced the purer conceptions of an earlier time, emphasising his disapproval by making the gods of the system he laboured to overthrow the devils of his own; and finally, with his faithful following, breaking away in an ancient *hijra* from the stiff-necked "worshippers of the *daévas*" to find a new home in that more Western land to which we now give the common name of Persia. This theory, it may be remarked, depended in great measure on the Bactrian hypothesis of Zoroaster's origin, which, based on Fargard I of the Vendidad, so long held sway, especially in Germany.

Concerning the composition of the Avesta we shall say something in another place; for the present it is sufficient to state that the Vendidad is that portion of it which contains

the religious laws and the mythology—a sort of Zoroastrian Pentateuch—and that it is divided into twenty two Fargards, or chapters) Of these the first describes the creations of Ahura Mazdā, and the counter creations of Anra Mainyu, the Evil Spirit (Ahriman), and includes an enumeration of the following sixteen lands created by the former (1) “*The Airyana Vaejō, by the good river Dāitya*” (a mythical region, identified in Sasanian times with the region of the River Araxes, that is, with the modern Āzarbayjān) (2) *Sughda* (Sogdiana, Sughd) (3) *Mouru* (Margiana, Merv), (4) *Bākhdi* (Bactria, Balkh), (5) *Nisāya* (? Nisāia, the capital of Parthia, the modern Nāsā in Khurasan, two days journey from Sarakhs and five from Merv) (6) *Haroyu* (Herat) (7) *Vaekereta* (identified with Kabul in the Pahlawi commentary), (8) *Urva* (identified with Tus) (9) *Vehrkāna* (Hyrcania, the modern Gorgan or Jurjan) (10) *Harahwaiti* (Ἀραχωῖος), and (11) *Haetument*, both in the region of the Helmand river (12) *Ragha* (Ray, Rayai, near the modern capital, Tihrán) (13) *Chakhra* (? Shargh or Jargh of Ibn Khuradhbih,<sup>1</sup> four parasangs from Bukhāra), (14) “*the four cornered Varena*” (? Elburz region) (15) the *Hapta Hētidu*, or Seven Rivers (the Panjāb) (16) “*the land by the floods of the Ranha, where people live without a head*” (i.e., a ruler)

In this list Geiger and some other scholars suppose that we have an itinerary of the migrations of the Irānians on their entry into Persia after the fission of the original Indo-Irānian community, which was located in the region of the Pamirs, whence the first stream of migration flowed mainly westwards to Sughd, Merv, Balkh, Nasa, and Herat another stream south and south west to the Panjab, Kabul, and the Helmand region while some adventurous spirits continued the westward migration as far as Gurgān and Ray But it is doubtful if much stress can be laid on the order observed in this

enumeration, that order being in any case almost indefensible (even excluding all doubtful identifications) on geographical grounds. And it seems at least possible that it may represent the conquests of the Zoroastrian faith rather than of the Íránian people, which hypothesis would be much strengthened if the identification of the Airyana Vaêjô with Atropatene (Ázarbáyján) could be established more surely: we should then have a fairly clear confirmation of that theory which we regarded as most probable. to wit, a religion having its source and home in the extreme north-west, but making its first conquests in the extreme north-east. Did we need any proof, that a prophet is often without honour in his own country, the history of Islám would supply it, and Balkh may well have been the Medína of the Zoroastrian faith.

Another period, subsequent alike to the Indo-Íránian and the primitive Íránian epochs, has been distinguished and discussed with care and acumen by Spiegel,<sup>1</sup> who places its beginning about B.C. 1000, namely, the period of Assyrian influence. An influence salient to all eyes in the sculptures and inscriptions of the Achæmenians, and discernible also, as Spiegel has shown, in many Persian myths, legends, and doctrines reflecting a Semitic rather than an Aryan tradition. It is a remarkable thing how great at all periods of history has been Semitic influence on Persia, Arabian in the late Sásánian and Muhammadan time; Aramaic in earlier Sásánian and later Parthian days, Assyrian at a yet more ancient epoch. And indeed this fact can scarcely be insisted upon too strongly, for the study of Persian has suffered from nothing so much as from the purely philological view which regards mere linguistic and racial affinities as infinitely more important and significant than the much deeper and more potent influences of literary and religious contact.

<sup>1</sup> *Erânische Alterthumskunde*, vol. 1, pp. 446-485, "Beginn der erânischen Selbständigkeit. Die ältesten Berührungen mit den Semiten."

Greek is far more widely studied in England than Hebrew, but for the understanding of the motives and conduct of a Scottish Covenanter or English Puritan, not to mention Milton's verse, a knowledge of the Bible is at least as necessary as a familiarity with the Classics, and in Persia, where both literary and religious influences have generally been in large measure Semitic, the same holds good to a much greater extent. If, as an adjunct to my equipment for the study of Persian thought and literature, I were offered my choice between a thorough knowledge of the Semitic and the Aryan languages, I should, from this point of view alone, unhesitatingly choose the former. A good knowledge of the Aramaic languages is essential for the study of Pahlavī, and a fruitful investigation of the post Muhammadan literature and thought of Persia is impossible without a wide acquaintance with Arabic books, while in both these fields a knowledge of Sanskrit is practically of very little use, and even in the interpretation of the Avesta it must be employed with some reserve and due regard to the Pahlavī tradition.

In concluding this introductory chapter it may be well to recapitulate the periods in Persian history of which  
 R capitulation. we have spoken

- I The Indo-Irānian period
- II The early Irānian period
- III The period of Assyrian influence (B C 1000) \*
- IV The Medic period (B C 700)
- V The Old Persian (Achæmenian) period (B C 550)
- VI Interregnum, from the Invasion of Alexander to the Sasanian Restoration (B C 330—A D 226)
- VII The Sasanian period (A D 226—652)
- VIII The Muhammadan period, extending from the fall of the Sasanian Dynasty to the present day

It is with the last of these periods that we are principally

concerned, and, as will in due time appear, it comprises numerous important subdivisions. Before approaching it, however, something more remains to be said of the older Persian literature and its discovery, and sundry other matters germane thereto, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DISCOVERY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE INSCRIPTIONS AND DOCUMENTS OF ANCIENT PERSIA, WITH OTHER PHILOLOGICAL MATTER

THE language of Modern, that is to say of Post Muham-  
madan, Persia, was naturally, for practical reasons, an object of  
interest and study in Europe long before any  
serious attempt was made to solve the enigmas  
presented by the three ancient languages of which  
this chapter will briefly trace the discovery and  
decipherment to wit, the *Old Persian* of the Achæmenian  
inscriptions, the *Avestic* idiom, and the *Pahlawi* of Sasanian  
times. The study of Modern Persian, again, was preceded  
by that of Arabic, which, as the vehicle whereby the  
Philosophy of the Greeks, especially of Aristotle, first  
became clearly known to Western Europe, commanded  
in a far higher degree the attention and interest of men  
of learning. The first translations from the Arabic into  
European languages were made about the be-  
ginning of the twelfth century of our era by  
Jews and Moors converted to Christianity,<sup>r</sup> who were

A great deal of interesting information concerning the early Oriental  
ists is contained in the *Gallia Orientalis* of Paul Colomes (*Opera* Hamburg  
1709 pp 1-27 ) and also in the excellent *Esquisse Historique* prefixed by  
Gustave Dugat to his useful *Histoire des Orientalistes de l'Europe du XII  
au XIX siècle* (Paris 1868) to which I am largely indebted in this portion

soon followed by native Europeans, such as Gerard of Cremona (b A.D. 1114); Albertus Magnus (b A.D. 1193), who, dressed as an Arab, expounded at Paris the teachings of Aristotle from the works of al-Fāiābī, Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), and al-Ghazzālī, and Michael Scot, who appears to have studied Arabic at Toledo in A.D. 1217 Roger Bacon

Thirteenth  
century

and Raymond Lull (thirteenth century) also called attention to the importance, for philosophic and scientific purposes, of a study of Oriental languages. In A.D. 1311-1312 it was ordained by Pope Clement the Fifth that Professorships of Hebrew, Chaldean, and Arabic should be established at Rome, Paris,

Fourteenth  
century

Bologna, Oxford and Salamanca, whose teaching, however, was soon afterwards (A.D. 1325) placed by the Church under a rigorous supervision, lest it should tend to endanger Christian orthodoxy. At each of these five seats of learning there were to be two professors, paid by the State or the Church, who were to make faithful Latin translations of the principal works written in these languages, and to train their pupils to speak them sufficiently well for missionary purposes

It does not appear, however, that these laudable proposals met at first with any great measure of success, or that much was actually done to further the study of Arabic until the establishment of the Collège de France in A.D. 1530 by Francis the Fifth. Armegand of

Sixteenth  
century

Montpelier<sup>1</sup> had already, in A.D. 1274, translated portions of the works of Avicenna and Averroes into Latin, but that remarkable scholar and traveller, Guillaume Postel<sup>2</sup> may,

of my subject See also M Jourdain's *Recherches critiques sur l'âge et l'origine des traductions latines d'Aristote et sur les commentaries grecs ou arabes employes par les docteurs scholastiques*

<sup>1</sup> This is the first biography given in the *Gallia Orientalis* "Gallorum primus," says the author, "quod sciam, qui Linguas Orientales ab anno millesimo ducentesimo excoluerit, fuit Armegandus Blasii, Doctor Medicus, regnante Philippo, Ludovici cognomine Sancti filio"

<sup>2</sup> He died in 1581 at the age of 95 or 96 See *Gallia Orientalis*, pp 59-66

according to M. Dugit, be called "the first French Orientalist", and he, apparently, was the first who caused Arabic types to be cut. In A.D. 1587 Henry the Third founded an Arabic chair at the College de France, and a few years subsequently Savary de Breves, who is said to have had a fine taste in Oriental literature, and who later brought to Paris excellent founts of type which he had caused to be engraved in the East, was appointed French Ambassador at Constantinople. On his death these founts of type (Arabic, Syriac, Persian, Armenian, and Æthiopic), together with his Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Syriac MSS., were bought by Louis the Thirteenth (assisted financially by the clergy), and passed into the possession of the Imprimerie Royale.

The full development of Oriental studies in Europe, however, may be said to date from the seventeenth century, since which epoch progress has been steady and continuous. This century saw, for example, in England the establishment, by Sir Thomas Adams and Archbishop Laud respectively, of Arabic chairs at both Cambridge (A.D. 1632) and Oxford (A.D. 1636), of which the latter was filled by the illustrious Pococke and the former by the equally illustrious Abraham Wheelock, who, with the teaching of Arabic and Anglo-Saxon, combined the function of University Librarian. Amongst his pupils was that distinguished scholar, Thomas Hyde, afterwards Professor of both the Hebrew and the Arabic languages at Oxford, whose work on the *History of the Religion of the Ancient Persians, Parthians, and Medes*, published in 1700, little more than a year before his death,<sup>1</sup> may be taken as representing the high water mark of knowledge on this subject at the close of the seventeenth century, and, indeed,

He died on February 18 1700 having resigned the Librarianship of the Bodleian in April 1701. The second edition of his *Elementum Persarum Religionis Historia* published in 1760 is that to which reference is here made.

until the publication of Anquetil du Perron's epoch-making memoirs (1763-1771), of which we shall shortly have to speak. A brief statement, therefore, of Hyde's views may appropriately form the starting-point of this survey; for his industry, his scholarship, and his linguistic attainments, added to the facilities which he enjoyed as Librarian of the Bodleian, rendered his work as complete and comprehensive an account of the ancient Persian religion as was possible with the materials then available. Hyde not only used the works of his predecessors, such as Barnaby de Brisson's *De Regio Persarum Principatu Libri Tres* (Paris, 1606) a book based entirely on the statements of Greek and Latin authors, Henry Lord's *Religion of the Parsees* \* (1630), Sanson's *De hodierno statu Persiæ* (1683), and the narratives of the travellers Pedro Texeira (1604), Père Gabriel de Chinon (1608-1650), Tavernier (1629-1675), Olearius (1637-1638), Thevenot (1664-1667), Chardin (1665-1677), Petits de la Croix (1674-1676), and Samuel Flower (1667), but also a number of Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew, and Syriac manuscripts, which he manipulated with a skill deserving of the highest praise; and the knowledge thus acquired was supplemented in some cases by information verbally obtained by his friends in India from the Parsees. His work, in short, is a monument of erudition, most remarkable when we consider the time at which it was written and the few facilities then existing for research of this kind; and in some cases his acumen anticipated discoveries not confirmed till a much later date. Thus he recognised the name of Media in

\* The full title of this tract (for it comprises but 53 pages) is *The Religion of the Persees, as it was Compiled from a Booke of theirs, containing the Forme of their Worshipp, written in the Persian Character, and by them called their Zundavastaw, wherein is shewed the Superstitious Ceremonies used amongst them, more especially their Idolatrous Worshipp of Fire*. The author's information was derived from a Pârsî of Surat "whose long employment, in the Companies service, had brought him to a mediocrity in the English tongue". The book contains but meagre information concerning the Zoroastrian tenets, and indicates not even an indirect knowledge of the contents of the Avesta.

the Arabic *Mdh* prefixed to certain place names (p 424), was aware of the existence amongst the Zoroastrians of Persia of a peculiar "gabri" dialect (pp 364, 429), knew the Hurufi sect as a revived form of Manichæanism (p 283), made free use of the rare Arabic translation of the *Šdšt ndrā* of al Bundarī, and was acquainted with the so-called Zend character,<sup>1</sup> and with such later Parsi writings as the *Zardtusht ndrā*, the *Sad dar* (of which he gives a complete Latin translation), and the Persian translation of the *Book of Arda Viraf*.

On the other hand he had no knowledge whatever of the Avestic or Pahlawi languages, entirely misunderstood the meaning of the term *Zend Avesta* or *Avesta va Zend*, and endeavoured to prove that the Old Persian inscriptions were not writing at all, but mere architectural ornamentation. Anquetil du Perron at the end of his *Discours Préliminaire* (pp cccclxxxix–cccxcviii) is at some pains to prove the first of these statements, and points out that throughout Hyde's work the Zend character merely serves to cloak Persian sentences cited from late Parsi writings. But in fact proof is unnecessary, for Hyde had in his own possession a MS of part of the Avesta, and was also acquainted with the MS of the *Yasna* presented to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, by an English merchant named Moody about the middle of the seventeenth century,<sup>2</sup> and is quite certain that he would

<sup>1</sup> It would appear from a remark of Sir W. Jones in the *Lettre à Monsieur A. du P.* hereafter cited (p 602) that Dr Hyde caused the Zend characters employed in his book to be cast for his own use. The fount is an excellent one—much more artistic than that used in the latest edition of the *Avesta* (Geldner's).

See Hyde *op. cit.* p 344 *ad calc.* The Emmanuel MS now bears the class mark 3 2 6 and contains the following inscription in English.

This Booke is called Ejessney written in the language Jenwista and containes ye Religion of ye Antient Parsyes. A note in German on a loose sheet of paper describes it as a copy of the *Yasna* not quite complete ending ch. 1 2 (Westergaard) and lacking the last quarter not dated probably middle of the seventeenth century. Though not old it is accu

have made use of documents so important for his purpose had he been able to read them. Now since he was conversant with the character in which they were written, and even, as we have seen, employed it in his work, it is evident that he could make nothing whatever of the language. As regards the title of the sacred book of the Zoroastrians, he regarded it as "exotic and hybrid," supposing that it consisted of the Arabic word *Zend* (an implement for kindling fire), and the Hebrew-Chaldæan *eshta*, "fire" (*op. laud.*, pp. 335 *et seqq.*). Lastly, he regarded the Old Persian inscriptions as trifles, hardly worthy of attention but for the curiosity already aroused by them (p. 546), and declared in the most positive fashion that they were not Old Persian (p. 547), and, indeed, not inscriptions at all, but mere fanciful designs of the original architect (pp. 556-557). In the adjacent Pahlawí inscriptions of Naqsh-e-Rajab he equally refuses to recognise any form of Persian script. "As regards Nos. 1 and 4" (the Sásánian Pahlawí), he says, "I assert that these characters cannot be ancient Persian, which are perceived, in their ancient books, which I myself possess, to differ from them *toto cælo*" (p. 548)

Such, then, was the state of knowledge in 1754. No further advance had been made towards the understanding of the Avesta, though several new MSS. had been brought to England to wit, a MS. of the *Vendidad* obtained from the Pársís of India by George Bouchier (or Bowcher) in 1718, conveyed to England by Richard Cobbe in 1723, and presented to the Bodleian, where it is now preserved (BODL. OR 321); and two MSS. of the *Yasna* bought at Surat by Frazer, who also endeavoured, but vainly, to induce the Zoroastrian priests to teach him the Avestic and Pahlawí languages. But in the

Anquetil du  
Perron (1754-  
1771)

rately written from a good MS. It agrees with the best MSS., but not entirely with any, most closely with K II. The orthography is very consistent, and it is important for critical purposes, being an independent codex

year above mentioned a facsimile of four leaves of the Bodleian MS of the *Vendidad* fell into the hands of a young Frenchman, Anquetil du Perron, then not much more than twenty years of age, and he, with an impulsiveness and devotion to science truly Gallic, at once resolved to win for his country the glory of wresting from the suspicious priesthood who guarded them the keys to these hidden secrets of an old world faith, and of laying before the learned world a complete account of the Zoroastrian doctrines, based, not on the statements of non Zoroastrian or even modern Parsi writers, but on the actual testimony of the ancient Scriptures themselves. So eager was his haste that, though assured of help and pecuniary assistance in his projected journey to India, his impatience to begin his work impelled him to enlist as a common soldier of the French East India Company—so firm was his purpose and so steadfast his resolve that, in face of every kind of difficulty and discouragement, suffering, sickness, opposition, perils by sea and perils of war, he persevered for seven years and a half, until, on March 15, 1762, having at length regained Paris after his long and adventurous exile, he deposited his precious manuscripts, the fruits of his incredible labours, in the Bibliothèque du Roi. Yet still nine years laborious, but now tranquil, work lay before him ere, in 1771, he was able to offer to the world the assured and final outcome of his endeavour—a great work in three volumes bearing the following cumbrous title *Zend Avesta, ouvrage de Zoroastre, contenant les idées théologiques, physiques, et morales de ce législateur, les cérémonies du culte religieux qu'il a établi, et plusieurs traits importants relatifs à l'ancienne histoire des Perses, traduit en Français sur l'original Zend avec des Remarques et accompagné de plusieurs traités propres à éclaircir les matières qui en sont l'objet*. This work was in the fullest sense of the word epoch making, or, as the Germans say, "bahn brechend". Anquetil completely accomplished the great task he had set himself. Much remained to be done in detail by his successors, many inaccuracies are

naturally to be found in his work,<sup>1</sup> yet we may fairly say that to him in chief belongs the merit of those discoveries as to the religion and language of the ancient Zoroastrians from which so many important results, literary, philological, ethnological, and philosophical, have since been drawn.

Of the details of Anquetil's journey this is hardly the place to speak. They are narrated with great minuteness in the first volume of his work (pp i-cccclxxviii), and include, in truth, a mass of purely personal details which might, perhaps, as well have been omitted, and which certainly rendered the book an easier target for the derision to which it was destined shortly to be exposed. Briefly, Anquetil quitted Paris with his "petit equipage" (containing, except for a few books, only two shirts, two handkerchiefs and a pair of socks), without the knowledge or any one except his brother, who was bound to secrecy, on November 7, 1754, and marched with his company men little to his taste, whom he speaks of as "ces brutaux" to L'Orient, which he reached on the 16th. Here he was informed that the King had been graciously pleased to grant him an allowance of five hundred livres, and he was further accorded a first-class passage to India. Sailing from L'Orient on February 7, 1755, he reached Pondichery on August 9th of the same year, and there was hospitably received by M. Goupil, the Commandant of the troops. He at once set himself to learn Persian, which afterwards served as the means of communication between himself and the Zoroastrian priests. More than three years elapsed, however, ere he reached Surat (May 1, 1758), shortly before it passed into the hands of the English (March, 1759). This long delay in the prosecution of his plan was caused, apparently, partly by his insatiable curiosity as to the antiquities, religions, customs, and languages of India (for his original scheme extended far beyond what

<sup>1</sup> For an example, see Haug's *Essays on the Parsis*, edited by West (third edition, London, 1884), p. 24.

immediately concerned the Zoroastrian religion), partly by the political complications of that time. After numerous adventures, however, he ultimately arrived at Surat on the date indicated above. He at once put himself in relation with two *Pársi dasturs*, or priests, named *Daráb* and *Ká us*, from whom, three months later, he received, after many vexatious delays and attempts at extortion and evasion, a professedly complete copy of the *Vendidad*. Fully aware of the necessity for caution, he succeeded in borrowing from another *dastur*, *Manuchihri* (who, owing to religious differences, was not on terms of intercourse with *Daráb* and *Ká us*) another good and ancient manuscript of the same work, and, on collating this with the other, he was not long in discovering that his two *dasturs* had deliberately supplied him with a defective copy. They, on being convicted of this fraud, became at once more communicative, and less disposed to attempt any further imposition, and furnished him with other works, such as the *Persian Story of Sanjdn* (of which Anquetil gives an abstract at pp cccxiii-cccxxiv of his work), an account of the descent of all copies of the *Vendidad* and its *Pahlawi* commentary preserved in India from a Persian original brought thither from Sistan by a *dastur* named *Ardashir* about the fourteenth century of our era, and a further account of the relations maintained from time to time by the Zoroastrians of Persia with those of India.

On March 24, 1759, Anquetil completed his translation of the *Pahlawi Persian vocabulary*, and six days later began the translation of the *Vendidad*, which, together with the collation of the two MSS, he finished on June 16th of the same year. A severe illness, followed by a savage attack by a compatriot, interrupted his work for five months, and it was not till November 20th that he was able to continue his labours with the help of the *dastur* *Daráb*. During this time he received much help and friendly protection from the English, notably from Mr Spencer, of

whom he speaks in the highest terms (p. cccxlv), and Mr Erskine. Having completed the translation of the *Yasna*, *Vispered*, and *Vendidâd*, the Pahlawî *Bundahish*, the *Si-rûza*, *Rivâyats*, &c., and visited the sacred fire in its temple, and the *dakhmas*, or "towers of silence," Anquetil, again attacked by illness, and fearful of risking the loss of the precious harvest of his labours, resolved to renounce his further projects of travel, which included a journey to China. Again assisted by the English, to whom, notwithstanding the state of war which existed between his country and theirs, he did not fear to appeal, knowing them, as he says, "généreux quand on les prend par un certain côté" (p. ccccxix), he sailed from Surat to Bombay, where, after, a sojourn of more than a month, he shipped himself and his precious manuscripts (180 in number, enumerated in detail at pp. dxxix-dxli of the first volume of his work) on board the *Bristol* on April 28, 1761, and arrived at Portsmouth on November 17th of the same year. There he was compelled, greatly to his displeasure, to leave his manuscripts in the custom-house, while he himself was sent with other French prisoners to Wickham. As, however, he was not a prisoner of war (being, indeed, under English protection), permission was soon accorded him to return to France, but, eagerly as he desired to see his native country after so long an absence, and, above all, to secure the safety of those precious and hardly-won documents which still chiefly occupied his thoughts, he would not quit this country without a brief visit to Oxford, and a hasty inspection of the Avestic manuscripts there preserved. "Je déclarai net," he says (p. ccccliv), "que je ne quitterais pas l'Angleterre sans avoir vu Oxford, puis qu'on m'y avait retenu prisonnier contre le droit des gens. Le désir de comparer mes manuscrits avec ceux de cette célèbre Université n'avait pas peu ajouté aux raisons qui m'avaient comme forcé de prendre, pour revenir en Europe, la voie Anglaise." Well furnished with letters of introduction, he arrived at Oxford on January 17, 1762,

whence, after a stay of two days, he returned, by way of Wickham, Portsmouth, and London, to Gravesend, where he embarked for Ostend on February 14th. He finally reached Paris on March 14, 1762, and on the following day at length deposited his manuscripts at the *Bibliothèque du Roi*.

The appearance of Anquetil's work in 1771 was far from at once convincing the whole learned world of the great services which he had rendered to science. In place of the wisdom expected from a sage like Zoroaster, who, even in classical times, enjoyed so great a reputation for profound philosophic thought, the curious and the learned were confronted with what appeared to them to be a farrago of puerile fables, tedious formulæ, wearisome repetitions, and grotesque prescriptions. The general disappointment (which, indeed, Anquetil had himself foreseen and foretold, pp. 1-11), found its most ferocious expression in the famous letter of Sir William Jones, at that time a young graduate of Oxford.<sup>1</sup> This letter, written in French on the model of Voltaire, will be found at the end of the fourth volume (pp. 583-613) of his works (London, 1799). It was penned in 1771, the year in which Anquetil's work appeared, and is equally remarkable for the vigour and grace of its style, and the deplorable violence and injustice of its contents. The writer's fastidious taste was offended by Anquetil's prolixity and lack of style, while his anger was kindled by the somewhat egotistic strain which, it must be admitted, runs through the narrative portion of his work, and by certain of his reflections on the English in general and the learned doctors of Oxford in particular, and he suffered himself to be so blinded by these sentiments that he not only overwhelmed Anquetil with satire and invective which are not always in the best

He was at this time about twenty-five years of age, a Fellow of University College and a B.A. of three years standing. He died in 1794 at the age of forty-eight.

taste, but absolutely refused to recognise the immense importance, and even the reality, of discoveries which might have condoned far more serious shortcomings. As Darmesteter happily puts it, "the *Zend-Avesta* suffered for the fault of its introducer, Zoroaster for Anquetil."

As a matter of fact Anquetil's remarks about the English are (when we remember the circumstances under which he wrote, in time of war, when he had seen his nation worsted by ours, and had himself been held captive, not being a prisoner of war, within our borders) extremely fair and moderate, nay, most gratifying, on the whole, to our *amour propre*, as may be seen in his glowing eulogy of Mr Spencer (p cccxlv), his remarks on the generosity of the English towards the unfortunate of even a hostile nation (p. cccxxx), his recognition of their hospitality and delicacy of feeling (pp cccxxxvii-xxxix), and the like; while his raileries at one or two of the Oxford doctors at the "*méchant bonnet gras à trois cornes*" of Dr. Swinton, the ill-judged pleasantry of Dr. Hunt, the haughty and magisterial bearing of Dr. Barton are in reality very harmless, and quite devoid of malice. In short, there is nothing in Anquetil's book to justify Sir William Jones's bitter irony and ferocious invective, much less his attempt to deny the great services rendered to science by the object of his attack, and to extinguish the new-born light destined to illuminate in so unexpected a manner so many problems of history, philology, and comparative theology. Here are a few specimens sufficient to illustrate the general tone of his letter.

Specimens of  
Sir W. Jones's  
letter  
to Anquetil

"Ne soyez point surpris, Monsieur, de recevoir cette lettre d'un inconnu, qui aime les vrais talens, et qui sait apprécier les vôtres

"Souffiez qu'on vous félicite de vos heureuses découvertes. Vous avez souvent prodigué votre précieuse vie, vous avez franchi des mers orageuses, des montagnes remplies de tigres, vous avez flétri votre teint, que vous nous dites, avec autant d'élégance que de modestie, avoir été composé

*de lis et de roses* vous avez essuyé des maux encore plus cruels et tout cela uniquement pour le bien de la littérature et de ceux qui ont le rare bonheur de vous ressembler

Vous avez appris deux langues anciennes que l'Europe entière ignorait vous avez rapporté en France le fruit de vos travaux les livres du célèbre Zoroastre vous avez charmé le public par votre agréable traduction de cet ouvrage et vous avez atteint le comble de votre ambition ou plutôt l'objet de vos ardens desirs vous êtes Membre de l'Académie des Inscriptions

Nous respectons comme nous le devons cette illustre et savante Académie mais vous méritez ce nous semble un titre plus distingué Plus grand voyageur que Cadmus vous avez rapporté comme lui de nouveaux caractères et de nouveaux dieux A parler franchement on doit vous faire pour le moins l'Archimage ou grand prêtre des Guebres d'autant plus que dans ce nouveau poste vous auriez l'occasion de mettre un peu plus de feu dans vos écrits

Voyageur Savant Antiquaire Heros Libelliste quels titres ne méritez vous pas ?

Permettez maintenant Monsieur qu'on vous dise sérieusement ce que des gens de lettres pensent de votre entreprise de vos voyages de vos trois gros volumes et de votre savoir que vous vantez avec si peu de réserve On doit aimer le vrai savoir mais toutes choses ne valent pas la peine d'être sues

Socrate disait en voyant l'étalage d'un bijoutier De combien de choses je n'ai pas besoin ! On peut de même s'écrier en contemplant les ouvrages de nos erudits Combien de connaissances il m'importe peu d'acquiescer !

Si vous aviez fait cette dernière réflexion vous n'auriez pas affronté la mort pour nous procurer des lumières inutiles

Si ces raisonnemens Monsieur ne portent pas absolument à faux il en résulte que votre objet était ni beau ni important que l'Europe éclairée n'avait nul besoin de votre *Zende Vastâ* que vous l'avez traduit à pure perte et que vous avez prodigué inutilement pendant dix huit ans un temps qui devait vous être précieux Quelle petite gloire que de savoir ce que personne ne sait et n'a que faire de savoir ! On veut même croire que vous avez dans la tête plus de mots Zendes c'est à dire plus de mots durs trainans barbares que tous les savans de l'Europe Ne savez vous pas que les langues n'ont aucune valeur intrinsèque ? D'ailleurs êtes vous bien sur que vous possédez les anciennes langues de la Perse ? On ne saura jamais ne vous en déplaise les anciens dialectes de la Perse tandis qu'ils n'existent que dans les pré-

tendus livres de Zoroastre, qui d'ailleurs sont remplis de répétitions inutiles

“ ‘Mais,’ direz vous, ‘me soupçonne-t-on d’avoir voulu tromper le public ?’ Non, Monsieur, *on ne dit pas cela* Vous vous êtes trompé vous-même . .

“Jusqu’ici, Monsieur, nous n’avons d’autre plainte envers vous, que celle de nous avoir endormis , ce qui n’est pas certainement un crime en soi-même quant à ceux qui craignent ces vapeurs soporifiques, il est facile ou de ne pas lire un livre qui les donne, ou de l’oublier , le remède est aussi naturel que la précaution est bonne

“On ne dira rien de votre style dur, bas, inélégant, souvent ampoulé, rarement conforme au sujet, et jamais agréable Nous aurons plus à dire sur la fin de votre discours . Quelle punition votre Zoroastre ordonne-t-il pour les ingrats ? Combien d’urine de bœuf sont ils obligés d’avaler ? On vous conseille, Monsieur, de prendre une dose de cette sainte et purifiante liqueur .

“Nous avons, Monsieur, l’honneur de connaître le Docteur Hunt, et nous faisons gloire de le respecter Il est incapable de tromper qui que ce soit *Il ne nous a jamais dit*, il n’a pu vous dire, qu’il entendait les langues anciennes de la Perse Il est persuadé, aussi bien que nous, que personne ne les sait, et ne les saura jamais, à moins qu’on ne recouvre toutes les histoires, les poemes, et les ouvrages de religion, que le Calife Omar et ses généraux cherchèrent à détruire avec tant d’acharnement , ce qui rend inutile la peine de courir le monde aux dépens de l’éclat d’un *visage fleuri* Il ne regrette pas à la vérité son ignorance de ces langues , il en est assez dédommagé par sa rare connaissance du Persan moderne, la langue des Sadi, des Cashefi, des Nézamis, dans les livres desquels on ne trouve ni le Barsom, ni le Lingam, ni des observances ridicules, ni des idées fantastiques, mais beaucoup de reflexions piquantes contre l’ingratitude et la fausseté

“Vous triomphez, Monsieur, de ce que le Docteur Hyde ne savait pas les langues anciennes de la Perse , et vous ne dites rien de nouveau Vous reprenez le Docteur Hyde de ce qu’il ignorait que les cinq *gahs* signifiaient les cinq parties du jour , de ce qu’il dit *lou* au lieu de *lon* , et de ce qu’il ne savait pas qu’*Aherman*, le nom de votre diable Persan, était un abréviation du mot mélodieux *Engliri memosch* , car vous savez qu’en changeant *Engliri* en *Aher* et *memosch* en *man* on fait *Aherman* De la même manière on peut faire le mot *diable* en changeant *Engliri* en *di*, et *menoisch* en *able*.”

Sir William Jones then proceeds to make merry at the expense of Anquetil's translation—no difficult feat even with a better rendering of a work containing so much that is to us grotesque and puerile, as must, in some degree, be the case with what is produced by any people in its infancy—and thus sums up his reasonings —

Ou Zoroastre n'avait pas le sens commun ou il n'écrivit pas le livre que vous lui attribuez s'il n'avait pas le sens commun il fallait le laisser dans la foule et dans l'obscurité s'il n'écrivit pas ce livre il était impudent de le publier sous son nom. Ain i ou vous avez insulté le goût du public en lui présentant des sottises ou vous l'avez trompé en lui débitant des faussetés et de chaque côté vous méritez son mépris.

Sir William Jones's letter, though it served to mar Anquetil du Perron's legitimate triumph, and (which was more serious) to blind a certain number of scholars and men of letters to the real importance of his discoveries, has now only a historic interest. Time, which has so fully vindicated the latter that no competent judge now fails to recognise the merit of his work, also took its revenge on the former, and he who strained at the gnat of the *Zend Avesta* was destined to swallow the camel of the *Desdêr*—one of the most impudent forgeries ever perpetrated. With the original of this egregious work he was, indeed, unacquainted, for the only known manuscript of it, though brought from Persia to India by Mulla Ka'us about the year 1773, was only published by the son of the purchaser, Mulla Firuz, in 1818,<sup>2</sup> his knowledge of

A q etil  
enged.

Its full title is *The Desdêr or Sacred Writings of the Ancient Persian Prophets in the Original Tongue together with the Ancient Persian Version and Commentary of the Fifth Sasan carefully published by Mulla Firu bin Ka'us who has subjoined a copious Glossary of the Obsolete and Technical Persian Terms to which is added an English Translation of the Desdêr and Commentary. In two volumes* (Bombay 1818). Particulars concerning the unique manuscript will be found at p. vii of the Preface to the second volume. The *Desdêr* was examined and the futility of its pretensions exposed by de Sacy in the *Journal des Savants* (pp. 16–31 and

its contents was derived from a curious but quite modern Persian book (to which, however, it was his incontestable merit first to direct attention in Europe) entitled the *Dabistân-i-Madhdb* or "School of Sects," a treatise composed in India about the middle of the seventeenth century of our era<sup>1</sup> Of this work Sir William Jones spoke in 1789<sup>2</sup> in the following terms of exaggerated eulogy

"A fortunate discovery, for which I was first indebted to Mir Muhammed Husain, one of the most intelligent Muselmans in India, has at once dissipated the cloud, and cast a gleam of light on the primeval history of Iran and of the human race, of which I had long despaired, and which could hardly have dawned from any other quarter

"This rare and interesting tract on *twelve different religions*, entitled the *Dabistân*, and composed by a Mohammedan traveller, a native of *Cashmîr*, named Mohsan, but distinguished by the assumed surname of Fânî, or *Perishable*, begins with a wonderfully curious chapter on the religion of Húshang, which was long anterior to that of Zerátusht, but had continued to be secretly professed by many learned Persians even to the author's time, and several of the most eminent of them, dissenting in many points from the *Gabrs*, and persecuted by the ruling powers of their country, had retired to India, where they compiled a number of books, now extremely scarce, which Mohsan had perused, and with the writers of which, or

67-79) for January-February, 1821 See also Nos 6, 12, 13, 18, and 20 of the *Heidelberger Jahrbücher der Litteratur* for 1823 (vol 1), by H E G Paulus, and Erskine in vol 11 of the *Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society* The most probable theory of its origin is that suggested by Stanislas Guyard on pp 61-62 of the separate reprint of his admirable article *Un Grand Maître des Assassins au temps de Saladin*, published in the *Journal Asiatique* for 1877, viz, that it was the work, and contains the doctrines, of the Isma'îlîs

<sup>1</sup> See pp 141-142 of Rieu's *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum* There are several Oriental editions of the text, and an English translation by Shea and Troyer, printed at Paris in 1843 for the Oriental Translation Fund

<sup>2</sup> In his Sixth Anniversary Discourse on the Persians, delivered at a meeting of the Asiatic Society, in Calcutta, on February 19, 1789 (*Works*, vol 1, pp 73-94)

with many of them he had contracted an intimate friendship from them he learned that a powerful monarchy had been established for ages in Iran before the accession of Cayumers that it was called the Mahabadian for a reason which will soon be mentioned and that many princes of whom seven or eight only are named in the *Dabistan* and among them Mahbul or Maha Belı had raised their empire to the zenith of human glory If we can rely on this evidence which to me appears unexceptionable the Iránian monarchy must have been the oldest in the world but it will remain dubious to which of the stocks *Hindu Arabian* or *Tartar* the first kings of Iran belonged or whether they sprang from *fourth* race distinct from any of the others and these are questions which we shall be able I imagine to answer precisely when we have carefully inquired into the *languages* and *letters* *religion* and *philosophy* and incidentally into the *arts* and *sciences* of the ancient Persians

In the new and important remarks which I am going to offer on the ancient *languages* and *characters* of Iran I am sensible that you must give me credit for many assertions which on this occasion it is impossible to prove for I should deserve your indulgent attention if I were to abuse by repeating a dry list of detached words and presenting you with a vocabulary instead of a dissertation but since I have no system to maintain and have not suffered imagination to delude my judgment since I have habituated myself to form opinions of men and things from *evidence* which is the only solid basis of *civil* experiment is of *natural* knowledge and since I have maturely considered the questions which I mean to discuss you will not I am persuaded suspect my testimony or think I go too far when I assure you that I will assert nothing positively which I am not able satisfactorily to demonstrate

It will be seen from the above citation that Sir William Jones was just as positive in his affirmations as in his negations, and too often equally unfortunate in both He confidently, and "without fear of contradiction, identified Cyrus with the entirely legendary Kay Khusraw of the Persian Epic (the Kawa Husrawa or Husrawanh of the Avesta), and the legendary Pishdádı kings with the Assyrians derived the name of Cambyses (the *Kambuyiya* of the Old Persian inscriptions) from the Modern Persian *Kdm bakhsh*, "granting desires, which he regarded as

Sir W J essays  
bl ders.

“a title rather than a name,” and Xerxes (the *Khshayārshā* of the inscriptions) from *Shhu’l* (and this after his scornful rejection of Anquetil’s correct derivation of *Ahriman* from *Aura Mainyush* <sup>1</sup>), continued to see “strong reasons to doubt the existence of genuine books in Zend or Pahlawí,” on the ground that “the well-informed author of the *Dabistān* affirms the work of Zērátusht to have been lost, and its place supplied by a recent compilation,” held “that the oldest discoverable languages of Persia were *Chaldaick* and *Sanscrit*, and that, when they had ceased to be vernacular, the *Pahlawí* and *Zend* were deduced from them respectively, and the *Pársí* either from the *Zend*, or immediately from the dialect of the Bráhmans;” believed (with the Persians) that Jamshíd (the *Yima* of the Avesta and *Yama* of the Hindú mythology, a shadowy personality belonging to the common Indo-Íránian legend) built Persepolis, and that the Achæmenian inscriptions there visible “if really alphabetical, were probably secret and sacerdotal, or a mere cypher, perhaps, of which the priests only had the key”; and finally accepted the absurd *Desátir* “a sacred book in a heavenly language” (which proves, in fact, to be no language at all, but mere gibberish, slavishly modelled on the ordinary Persian in which the “Commentary” is written) as an ancient historical document of capital importance, destined to throw an entirely new light on the earliest history of the Aryan people, and to prove “that the religion of the Bráhmans . . . prevailed in Persia before the accession of Cayúmers, whom the Pársís, from respect to his memory, consider as the first of men, although they believe in an *universal deluge* before his reign” Truly Anquetil was abundantly avenged, and the proposition that misplaced scepticism often coexists with misplaced credulity received a striking illustration <sup>1</sup>

But Sir William Jones, however greatly he may have fallen into error in matters connected with the ancient history and languages of Persia, was so eminent in his public career, so

catholic in his interests, so able a man of letters, and so elegant a scholar, that his opinion was bound to carry great weight, especially in his own country and consequently we find his scepticism as to the genuineness of the Avesta echoed in England by Sir John Chardin and Richardson (the celebrated Persian Lexicographer) and in Germany by Meiners and, at first, Tychsen, who, however, afterwards became one of Anquetil's strongest supporters, an attitude assumed from the first by another German scholar, Kleuker, who translated Anquetil's work into his own language, and added to it several appendices. In England, for the moment, Sir William Jones's opinion carried everything before it, and Anquetil's translation "was laid aside as spurious and not deserving any attention," while in France, on the other hand, it from the first commanded that general recognition and assent which are now universally accorded to it. To trace in detail the steps whereby this recognition was secured is not within the scope of this book, and we can only notice a few of the most important. Such as desire to follow them in detail will find all the information they require in the excellent accounts of Haug and Darmesteter referred to in the footnote on this page, as well as in Geldner's article, *Awestalitteratur*, in vol. II (pp. 1-53, especially p. 40, *Geschichte der Awestaforschung*) of Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie* (Strassburg, 1896).

The first important step in the vindication of Anquetil was made by his illustrious compatriot, Sylvestre de Sacy, who, in 1793, published in the *Journal des Savants* his five celebrated *Mémoires sur diverses Antiquités de la Perse*, which dealt chiefly with the Pahlavi inscriptions of the Sasanian kings, for the decipher

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Perse ( 793)

See West's third edition of Haug's *Essays on the Parsis* pp. 16-53 and Darmesteter's *Introduction* to his translation of the *Avesta* in Max Muller's *Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford 1880) vol. IV pp. XIII-XXV to both of which I have been greatly indebted in this portion of my subject.

ment of which he chiefly relied, apart from the Greek translations which accompany some of them, on the Pahlawí vocabulary given by Anquetil (vol. III, pp 432-526), "whose work," as Darmesteter well says, "vindicated itself thus better than by heaping up arguments by promoting discoveries" For the oldest extant manuscripts of the Avesta date only from the fourteenth century of our era, while the Sásánian inscriptions go back to the third, and could not, therefore, be set aside, even for a moment, as late forgeries; and if Anquetil's vocabulary furnished a key to these, it was manifest that the Pahlawí which he had learned from his *dastúrs* was the genuine language of Sásánian times, and that the occurrence in it of Semitic words, such as *malaká* "king," *shanat* "year," *ab* "father," *shamsá* "sun," *lá* "not," which Sir William Jones, regarding them as Arabic<sup>1</sup> (though he afterwards recognised them as Chaldean),<sup>2</sup> cited as proof of the fictitious antiquity of the language in which they occurred, of Anquetil's credulity, and of his Pársí instructor's fraud, was an indisputable fact, whatever might be its true explanation. Tychem insisted strongly on this point

"This," said he, "is a proof that the Pahlawí was used during the reign of the Sasanides, for it was from them that these inscriptions emanated, as it was by them—nay, by the first of them, Ardashír Bábagán—that the doctrine of Zoroaster was revived One can now understand why the Zend books were translated into Pahlawí Here, too, everything agrees, and speaks loudly for their antiquity and genuineness"<sup>3</sup>

The Pahlawí inscriptions thus deciphered by de Sacy had been

<sup>1</sup> *Lettre a Monsieur A . . . du P . . .*, p 610 "Lorsque nous voyons les mots Arabes corrompus . . . donnees pour des mots Zendes et Pehlevis, nous disons hardiment que ce charlatan [le reverend Docteur Darab] vous a trompe, et que vous avez tâché de tromper vos lecteurs"

<sup>2</sup> Sir W Jones's Works, vol 1, p 81

<sup>3</sup> Cited by Darmesteter in his Introduction (pp 111-11) to the Translation of the Vendidad (see n 1 on the previous page)

known in Europe since Samuel Flower published in the *Philosophical Transactions* for June, 1693 (pp 775-7) the copies of them which he had made in 1667, while further copies appeared in the works of Chardin (1711), Niebuhr (1778), and, at a later date, of other travellers,<sup>1</sup> but, though Hyde reproduced them in his book, de Sacy was the first to attempt with any success their interpretation.

Five years after the publication of de Sacy's *Mémoires* (1798), the Carmelite father, Paul de St Barthelemy, published at Rome his essay, *De antiquitate et affinitate linguæ persicæ et samscriticæ et germanicæ*, in which he defended the antiquity of the Avesta, and even uttered a conjecture as to the affinity of the language in which it is written with Sanskrit.<sup>2</sup>

The first important step in the next, and perhaps the greatest, achievement of Persian scholarship—to wit, the decipherment of the Persian cuneiform inscriptions (writings of which the character and language were alike unknown)—was made early in the nineteenth century by Grotefend, whose papers on this subject—models of clear reasoning and acute insight—have only recently been unearthed from the Archives of the Göttingen Royal Society of Sciences and published in the *Nachrichten* of that Society (September 13, 1893, pp 571-616) by W Meyer. Of these papers the first was originally read on September 4, 1802, the second on October 2nd, the

See West's account of the Sasanian Inscriptions in his article on Pahlawi Literature in Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss d. Iranischen Philologie* vol II pp 76-79 and also Haug's *Essay on Pahlawi* (Bombay and London 1870) which begins with a very full account of the progress of Pahlawi studies in Europe.

Darmesteter (*op cit*) p xx. The same conception now universally accepted (viz that the Avestic language and Sanskrit were sister tongues) was very clearly formulated by de Sacy in the *Journal des Savants* for March 1821 p 136.

third on November 13th of the same year, and the fourth on May 20, 1803. Till this time, though Tychsen and Munter had made vain attempts at decipherment, it was, as we have seen when examining Hyde's work, very generally held, even by men of learning, that these characters were not writing at all, but were either architectural ornaments, the work of worms or insects, or mason's marks and numerical signs. Grotefend, primarily impelled to this inquiry by a dispute with his friend Fiorillo as to the possibility of arriving at the meaning of inscriptions whereof the script and language were alike unknown or buried in oblivion, arrived in his first communication at the following important general conclusions.

Grotefend's  
general con-  
clusions

(1) That the figures constituting these inscriptions were graphic symbols, (2) that the inscriptions were trilingual, that is, that they consisted, as a rule, of three versions, each in a different language and script; (3) that the inscriptions which he proposed to explain, that is, those of the first class (the Old Persian) in particular, and also those of the second, consisted of actual *letters*, not of ideograms or logograms comparable to those employed in Assyrian and Chinese, (4) that all known cuneiform inscriptions were constant in direction, being in every case written horizontally from left to right.

From these general conclusions (all of which have since proved to be perfectly correct) Grotefend proceeded to examine more minutely two inscriptions of the first class, which he believed to be written in the so-called Zend (*ie*, Avestic) language—a conjecture which, though not the truth, was near the truth and which he correctly referred to “some ancient king of the Persians between Cyrus and Alexander,” in other words, to the Achæmenians\*. An examination of the Pahlawí inscriptions

Grotefend's  
method of  
procedure

\* The fact that the inscriptions of the first class were in the language of the Achæmenian kings—in other words, in an Old Persian language—was suggested to Grotefend by the position of honour always occupied by them in the trilingual tablets

of the Sásánians, already deciphered by de Sacy, suggested to him the probability that the first word in the inscription was the *name* of a king of this dynasty, and the second his *title*. He then observed that that name which stood at the *beginning* of the second inscription was in the first placed *after the title*, which (again guided by the analogy of the Sásánian inscriptions) he rightly assumed to signify "King of Kings," with a slight final modification, which he correctly conjectured to be the inflexion of the genitive case, from which he gathered that the two names in the first inscription were those of father and son. One of these names, which Tychsen had read *Malkeusch*, appeared to him to square best with Darius, whose name in the Books of Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah occurs in the form *Dáryávush* ("Darjavesch") another, read by Tychsen as *Osch patscha*, with Xerxes ("Khschihersche"). For both these names consisted, in the Old Persian inscriptions, of seven separate characters (these being, as we now know, in the first, D A R Y V U SH, and in the second, K SH Y A R SH A), of which one (A) occurred three times, and three (R, Y, SH) twice, in the two names and the assumption as to the reading of these names was confirmed by the order of the component letters of each. Now it was known from the accounts of the Greek historians that Darius was the son of Hystaspes, which name appeared in Anquetil's work in the native forms Gushtasp, Vishtásp, &c., and, from the analogy of the inscription of Xerxes, it appeared probable that Darius also in his inscription would mention this, his father's name. And, in effect, there occurred in the proper place in this inscription of Darius a group of ten letters, of which the last three (now known to represent H Y A) had already been recognised as the case ending of the genitive. Of the remaining seven, two—the third (SH) and fifth (A)—were already known, while, from what was common to the Greek and Avestic forms of the name, the fourth, sixth, and seventh might fairly be assumed to

represent T, S, and P respectively. There remained the two initial letters, of which it was pretty evident that the first was a consonant (G or V), and the second a vowel (not U, already known, and therefore presumably I), but Grotefend actually read them as G O instead of V. I.

Such were the great and definite results of Grotefend's discoveries. Further than this he endeavoured to go, but, on the one hand, he was misled by his belief that the language of the inscriptions was identical with that of the Avesta, and by the fact that Anquetil's account of the latter was imperfect and in many details erroneous; and, on the other hand, the materials at his disposal were inadequate and did not supply sufficient data for full decipherment and interpretation. Hence his scheme of the values of the letters was, as we now know, scarcely even half correct, while his interpretations and transcriptions of the texts which he attacked were but approximations. Thus one of the Persepolitan inscriptions with which he especially dealt (Niebuhr, Pl xxiv, Spiegel's *Keilinschriften*, ed. 1862, p. 48, B), is now known to read as follows

*Dárayavush . Khsháyathiya vazraka . Khsháyathiya Khsháyathiyánám . Khsháyathiya dahyunám Vishtáspahya putra . Hakháma nishya hya imam . tacharam . akunaush.*

That is to say .

"Darius, the great king, the king of kings, the king of the provinces, the son of Vishtaspa, the Achæmenian, who made this temple"

Grotefend's transcription and translation were as follows . -

*Dâikeûsch . Khshêlnôh eghré Khshêlnôh Khshêmhêlchâo . Khsheluo . Dâhûlchâo . Gôschtâspâhê . bûn . ákhêotchôschôh Áh . ôoo Môro êzûlchûsch*

"Darius, rex fortis, rex regum, rex Daharum (filius) Hystaspis, stirps mundi rectoris In constellatione mascula Môro roû Ized"

Yet, though Grotefend failed to accomplish all he attempted, few would have ventured even to attempt what he accomplished, and his method, and the discoveries to which it led, formed the starting point of the further researches which ultimately resulted in the complete solution of this difficult enigma. De Sacy, whose discoveries had prepared the way for those of Grotefend, was the first to recognise the immense value of his results, and to make them more widely known, while the rival system of interpretation proposed by Saint Martin met with but little acceptance <sup>1</sup>.

The next great advances in decipherment were made almost simultaneously in the years 1836-1837 by Lassen, Burnouf, and Rawlinson, the last of whom, working independently in Persia, without knowledge of what had been effected by Grotefend, succeeded in reading the names of Arshâma, Ariyaramna, Chaishpish, and Hakhmanish in the first paragraph of the great Behistun inscription of Darius. Burnouf had already made use of his knowledge of Sanskrit to elucidate the Avesta, both by the comparative method and by the use of Nerosengh's Sanskrit translation, and he now turned from the completion of his great work on the Yasna <sup>2</sup> to an examination of the Persian cuneiform inscriptions, for the study of which the labours of the unfortunate traveller Schultz had furnished him with fresh materials from Alvand and Vân <sup>3</sup>. His work was to some extent thrown

For further details and references as to the progress of the decipherment see Spiegel's *Kurze Geschichte der Entzifferung* at pp 119-132 of the already cited edition of his *Keilinschriften* also Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie* vol II pp 64-74 *Geschichte d Entzifferung und Erklärung d Inschriften*

*Commentaire sur le Yaçna l'un des livres religieux des Parses ouvrage contenant le texte zend expliqué pour la première fois les variantes des quatre manuscrits de la Bibliothèque royale et la version sanscrite inédite de Nerosengh* (Paris 1833-1835)

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoire sur deux Inscriptions cunéiformes* (Paris 1836)

Estimation of  
Grotefend's  
achievement.

Work of  
Rawlinson,  
Burnouf and  
Lassen.

into the shade by the more brilliant results of Lassen ; but, besides reading the name of the Supreme Being, Ahuramazda, and some other words, and pointing out that the language of the inscriptions, though akin to that of the Avesta, was not identical with it, and that the writing did not, as a rule, express the short vowels except when they were initial, he first called attention to the list of names of countries contained in the great inscription of Darius. This last indication, communicated to Lassen in the summer of 1835, was fruitfully utilised by the latter for the fuller and more accurate determination of the values of the letters, and the demonstration of the existence of an inherent short *a* (as in Sanskrit) in many of the consonants, so that, for example, S P R D was shown by him to stand for *Sparda*. Within the next four years (up to 1840) Lassen's results had been further extended, elucidated, and corrected by Beer and Jacquet, while new materials collected by the late Claude James Rich, British Resident at Baghdad, had been rendered available by publication, and Westergaard had brought back fresh and more accurate copies of the Persepolitan inscriptions.

It is unnecessary in this place to trace further the progress of this branch of Persian studies, or to do more than mention the later discoveries of Loftus (1852) and Dieulafoy (1884) at Susa, the photographs taken at Persepolis in 1876 and the following years by Stolze, and published at Berlin in 1882 in two volumes entitled *Persepolis*, and the additional light thrown on the Old Persian language and script by such scholars as Bang, Bartholomae, Bollensen, Foy, Halévy, Hitzig, Hubschmann, Kern, Muller, Ménant, Sayce, Thumb, and others. Nor need the wild theories as to the talismanic character of the inscriptions propounded by M le Comte de Gobineau in his *Traité des écritures cunéiformes* (Paris, 1864) detain us even for a moment. A few words must, however, be said as to Oppert's ingenious theory as to the origin and nature of the script.

Further progress  
of the study of  
Old Persian

(From the Old Persian character the Assyrian differs in one most essential respect, in spite of the superficial resemblance of these two cuneiform scripts. The former, as we have seen, is truly alphabetical (the alphabet consisting of forty one symbols, whereof four are logograms, or abbreviations for the constantly occurring words "Ahuramazda, "King, "Land," and "Earth, while one is a mark of punctuation to separate the words from one another), the latter is a syllabary, or rather an immense collection of ideograms or logograms, comparable to the Chinese or Egyptian hieroglyphics. An Assyrian graphic symbol usually connotes, in other words, an idea, not the sound representing that idea, and has, therefore, only a casual relation to its phonetic equivalent, so that, for instance, an ideogram from the older Akkadian could continue to be used in Assyrian with the same meaning but with a different phonetic value. (Oppert's theory is that the Old Persian letters, invented about the time of the fall of the Median and rise of the Persian (Achaemenian) power, were derived from the Assyrian ideograms as follows. An Assyrian ideogram was given its Persian phonetic equivalent, or, in other words, read as a Persian ideogram. This ideogram was then simplified and used as a letter having the value of the initial sound of the Persian word. and this process was continued until enough graphic symbols, or letters, had been formed to represent all the Persian phonetic elements. Thus the Persians, in the sixth century before Christ, made this great advance from a system of ideograms (probably hieroglyphic or pictorial in their first origin) to a real alphabet, but their analysis stopped short at the separation of a short vowel following a consonant, and therefore they employed separate characters, for example, for the syllables *ka, ku ga, gu ja, ji da, di, du ma, mi, mu, &c.*)

(We see here another illustration of the extent to which Persia, from very early times, has been under Semitic influence,

first Assyrian, then Aramaic, and lastly Arabian. The Assyrian influence is as unmistakable in the sculptures of Persepolis and Behistun as in the inscriptions; and, as Assyrian influence on Persian Spiegel has well shown (*Iranische Alterthumskunde*, vol. 1, pp. 116-485), it can be traced with equal clearness in the domain of religion, probably also of politics, social organisation, jurisprudence, and war. "The great King, the King of kings, the King in Persia, the King of the Provinces," was heir in far more than mere style and title to "the great King, the King of Assyria," with whose might Rabshakeh threatened Hezekiah. And this relation perhaps explains the enigma presented by the Huzvârish element in Pahlawí which so long misled students as to the true character of the latter.

Why did the Pahlawí scribe, fully acquainted with the alphabetical use of the Pahlawí character, write the old title "King of kings" as *Malkân-malkâ* when (as we know Discussion of a peculiarity of the Pahlawí script from the contemporary historian Ammianus Marcellinus) his soldiers and people hailed him (as they still hail their monarch) as *Shâhân-shâh* the later equivalent of the old *Khshâyathya Khshâyathiyândm*? Why did he write *bisrá* for meat and *lahmâ* for bread when (as we learn from the author of the *Fihrist*, and other well-informed writers of the early Muhammadan period) he read these Aramaic words into Persian as *gúsht* and *nân*? To us it seems unnatural enough, though even we do pretty much the same thing when we read "i e" as "that is," "e g" as "for example," and "ع" or "&" as "and." Yet how much easier and more natural was such a procedure to a people accustomed to scripts wholly composed of ideograms and symbols appealing directly to the intelligence without invoking aid from the auditory sense? If the Assyrian adopted the Akkadian logogram connoting the idea of "father," and read for it his own and not the original foreign equivalent, why should the Persian hesitate to treat the Aramaic words *malkâ*, *bisrá*, *lahmâ*

and the like, in the same way, as though they too were mere ideograms rather than groups of letters? The general use of Pahlawī, it is true, belongs, as we have already seen, to a time when Assyria had long passed away, viz., the Sāsānian period (A.D. 226–640), and the early Muhammadan times immediately succeeding it, but it has been traced back to the third and fourth centuries before Christ, and may in all likelihood have existed at a yet earlier date. In the essentially conservative East there is nothing very wonderful in this, and the *siyāq*, universally used for keeping accounts even at the present day in Persia, presents a somewhat analogous phenomenon, for the symbols used therein instead of the ordinary Arabic numerals are in reality mutilated and abbreviated forms of the Arabic names of the different numbers, a fact which the Persian accountant who uses them often forgets and occasionally does not know.)

Before speaking further of Pahlawī, however, something more must be said of the continued progress of Avestic studies.

We have seen what help was derived from Sanskrit by Burnouf and Lassen in their study of the Achæmenian Inscriptions, and have already alluded incidentally to the monumental work on the *Yasna* published by the former in 1833–1835. Working with the copious materials collected by Anquetil, which had long lain neglected in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, he first set himself, by careful collation of the MSS., to establish a correct text of this portion of the *Avesta*. For the elucidation of this he relied chiefly on Neriosengh's Sanskrit translation, as representing the oldest traditional interpretation available to him, which, however, he weighed, tested, and proved with the most careful and judicious criticism while at the same time he sought to establish the grammar and lexicography of the Avestic language. But he was content to show the way to others, and to place the study of the *Avesta* on a really sound and scientific basis. The large volume which he published elu

Further progress  
of Avestic  
studies.

cidates primarily only the first of the seventy-two chapters composing the Yasna, which is itself but one of the five divisions (the liturgical) of the Zoroastrian Scriptures; and though at a later date (1811-1846), he subjected the ninth chapter of the Yasna to a similar though briefer examination, he carried no further his investigations in this field

The appearance of Bopp's great work on the Comparative Grammar of the Aryan, or Indo-European, languages about this period brings us to the next great controversy which raged round the Avesta that of the Traditional and Comparative Schools. By this time no sane and competent scholar had any doubt as to the genuineness of the book itself, the question now was as to the worth of the traditional interpretation of the Zoroastrians. Burnouf, in so far as he relied on the traditional explanation of Nerosengh (for the older Pahlawí translations were not at that time sufficiently understood to be of much use), belonged to the former school, Bopp, pre-eminently a Sanskritist and Comparative Philologist, to whom the study of the Avesta was a mere branch of Sanskrit Philology, to the latter. The publication (1852-1858) of Westergaard's and Spiegel's editions of the text greatly enlarged the circle of students who were able to attack on their own account the problems presented by the Avesta; and what Darmesteter calls "the war of the methods" (*i.e.*, the Traditional and the Comparative) soon broke out on all sides. Of the Traditional School the most prominent representatives were, after Burnouf, Spiegel, and Justi, and, in a lesser degree, de Harlez and Geiger. of the Comparative School, Benfey and Roth. Windischmann held a middle position, while Haug, at first an ardent follower of Benfey, returned from India fully convinced of the value of the Pársí tradition, and thereafter became one of the pioneers of Pahlawí studies, a path in which he was followed with even more signal success by West, "whose unparalleled learning and

acumen,' as Geldner says,\* "have raised up Pahlawi studies from the lowest grade of science, so that "indirectly he became the reformer of Avesta studies. But it was by that incomparable man, the late James Darmesteter, that the judicious and almost exhaustive use of the traditional materials (combined, of course, with a careful study of the texts themselves) was carried to its fullest extent, and it is pleasant to find Geldner, whose methods of textual criticism he had so severely criticised, describing his work and methods in the following generous words —' 2

From the beginning an eager partisan of the Sasanian translation and thoroughly grounded in Pahlawi he in no wise based his interpretation on this alone but recognised that amidst the strife as to the best method only a comprehensive enlargement of the field of vision could lead from groping and guessing to clear and certain knowledge. His immediate sources of help are the native translations carefully used in detail and thoroughly studied as a whole and the entire learning accumulated therein. His indirect means of help is the entire tradition from Sasanian times down to the present day the whole Pahlawi and Pazand literature the Shahnama the Arabian chroniclers and historical notices of the Ancients personal information derived from living Pársis their customs and ideas the ritual of the present time which is likewise a piece of unfalsified tradition and on the linguistic side the entire material of Iranian philology in all its degrees of development and dialectical variations and likewise Sanskrit especially that of the Vedas. The dispositions and beginnings had for the most part been already made before him although imperfectly and with insufficient means but Darmesteter combined them and carried them on to a certain conclusion. The ripest fruit of these endeavours is his most recent monumental work *le Zend Avesta traduction nouvelle avec commentaire historique et philologique* (Annales du Musée Guimet vols xxi xxii xxiv Paris 189-3). Darmesteter rejuvenated the traditional school and is properly speaking the creator of what he calls the

\* See Geldner's excellent article (*Geschichte der Awestaforschung*) in vol ii of Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie* pp 40-46 where full particulars and references concerning the study of the Avesta will be found

historical method of the study of the Avesta, for the elucidation of which he collected an incomparably rich material. How far indeed he succeeded in this, how far as regards points of detail he overshot the mark, the Future must decide."

Let us now return to the history of the decipherment of the Pahlawí inscriptions and texts—that branch of Persian philology in which, despite the fruitful labours of de Sacy and his successors, of whom we shall speak immediately, and the copious illumination of this difficult study which we owe in recent times to West, Andreas, Noldeke, Daimesteter, Salemann, and others, most yet remains to be achieved.

De Sacy's brilliant attempt to read some of the Sásánian inscriptions at Naqsh-i-Rustam (situated on the cliffs which lie to the right of the Pulwár river, at the point where the valley through which its course has hitherto lain debouches into the Marv-Dasht plain between Síwand and Zargún, and consequently opposite Persepolis, which lies across the river, some two or three miles eastward) has been already mentioned (pp. 57-8 *supra*). The inscription which he especially studied was one of the oldest, if not the oldest, of those which the Sásánian monarchs cut on these rocks in imitation of their Achæmenian predecessors, for it dates from the reign of Ardashír (Artakhshatr) the son of Pápak, the founder of this dynasty (A D 226-241). It is written in two forms of Pahlawí (the so-called Chaldæan and Sásánian), each having its own peculiar script, and is accompanied by a Greek translation, which runs as follows<sup>1</sup>

"ΤΟΥΤΟ ΤΟ ΠΡΟΣΟΠΟΝ ΜΑΣΔΑΣΕΝΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ ΑΡΤΑΞΑΡΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΣ  
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΑΡΙΑΝΩΝ ΕΛΓΕΥΟΥΣ ΘΕΩΝ ΥΙΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ ΠΑΠΑΟΥ  
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ"

<sup>1</sup> I have taken the texts from Haug's *Essay on Pahlawí* (Stuttgart, 1870), pp. 4-5, and have followed his method of representing the obliterated letters of the Greek inscription by using small type instead of capitals. When I saw and examined the inscription in March, 1888, when on my way from the north to Shíraz, it had suffered still further defacement

The Sásánian Pahlawí, when transliterated, runs something like this —

PATKARI ZANÁ MAZDAYASŪ BAGI ARTAKHSHATR  
MALKÁN MALKÁ AIKAN MINU CHITRI MIN YAZTÁN BAPA  
PÁPAKI MALKÁ

The English translation is —

THE EFFIGY OF THAT MAZDA WORSHIPPING DIVI  
NITY ARTAKHSHATI KING OF KINGS OF IRAN (PERSIA)  
OF SPIRITUAL ORIGIN FROM THE GODS SON OF PAPA  
THE KING

Encouraged by the results of this investigation, de Sacy proceeded in his third and fourth memoirs to examine the Pahlawí legends on certain Sásánian coins, as well as other inscriptions from Behistun of the same period. How his labours formed the starting point for Grotefend's attempt to decipher the Old Persian cuneiform inscriptions we have already seen (pp 60-61 *supra*). The numismatic portion of his work was continued by Ouseley (1801), who succeeded in reading the legends on some twoscore Sásánian coins and also (1808-1813) by Tychsen.

The character in which the Pahlawí books are written differs considerably from that of the contemporary monuments (inscriptions and coins) of the Sásánians, and is far more ambiguous. It must be remembered that, with the exception of the fragments of Pahlawí papyrus discovered some twenty two years ago in the Fayyum in Egypt, and hitherto unpublished and but partially

The words printed in italics are Huzvarish (a term which will be explained presently) and in reading the Persian would replace the Aramaic equivalent. Thus *zand* (that) would be read *dn Malkán malká* (King of kings) *Sháhdn sháh min* (from) *a bard* (son) *fur* or *puhar* and *malka shih*

deciphered, the oldest specimen of written Pahlawí goes back only to A. D. 1323 that is, is subsequent by more than a thousand years to the inscription cited above. During this period (for the last half of which the Pahlawí script had ceased to be used save by the Zoroastrian priests for the transcription of works already extant) the written character had undergone considerable degeneration, so that characters originally quite distinct had gradually assumed the same form, thus giving rise to polyphony, or the multiple values of single characters. This polyphony already existed to some extent in the inscriptions, but in the book-Pahlawí it has undergone so great an extension that, to take only one instance, a single character now stands for the four values *z*, *d*, *g*, *y*, each of which had in the inscriptions its separate graphic symbol. Hence the difficulty of the book-Pahlawí, and hence the value of the Sásanian inscriptions in its elucidation. This value Marc

Müller's essay Joseph Muller, professor at Munich, thoroughly recognised in his *Essai sur la langue Pehlvi*, published in the *Journal Asiatique* of April, 1839, which essay, as Haug says, marks a fresh epoch in Pahlawí studies. Amongst the Zoroastrians, especially amongst the Pársís of Bombay, a traditional but corrupt method of reading the Pahlawí books had been preserved, which resulted in a monstrous birth of utterly fictitious words, never used by any nation either in speech or writing, such as *boman* (really *bará*) "son," *modá* (really *malyá*) "word," *Anhoma* (really *Awharmaza*) "God," *jammuntan* (really *yemaleluntan*) "to speak," and the like. In each instance the ambiguous Pahlawí character admitted of this reading, as it admitted of a dozen others, but a comparison with the less ambiguous inscriptional Pahlawí sufficed in many cases to establish the correct form, and this control it was Muller's merit to have introduced, though naturally it was not in every case vouchsafed to him to arrive at the correct reading.

Before going further, it will be proper to say something

more as to the essential peculiarity of Pahlawi to which we have already repeatedly alluded, namely, its *Huzvarish* or *Zavdrishn* element of Aramaic words more or less defaced in many cases by the addition of Persian inflexional terminations and "phonetic complements." When a Pahlawi text is read, a large proportion of the words composing it are found to be Semitic, not Iranian, and, to be more precise, to be drawn from an Aramaic dialect closely akin to Syriac and Chaldean. Now since an ordinary modern Persian text also contains a large proportion of Semitic (in this case Arabic) words, which are actually read as they are written, and are, in fact, foreign words as completely incorporated in Persian as are the Greek, Latin, French, and other exotic words which together constitute so large a portion of the modern English vocabulary in our own language, it was at first thought that the Aramaic element in Pahlawi was wholly comparable to the Arabic element in modern Persian. But a more careful examination showed that there was an essential difference between the two cases. However extensively one language may borrow from another, there is a limit which cannot be exceeded. It would be easy to pick out sentences of modern Persian written in the high flown style of certain ornate writers in which all the substantives, all the adjectives, and all the verbal nouns were Arabic, and in which, moreover, Arabic citations and phrases abounded, yet the general structure of the sentence, the pronouns, and the auxiliary verbs would and must continue to be Persian. Similarly in a sentence like "I regard this expression of opinion as dangerous," only four of the eight words employed are really of English descent, yet the sentence is thoroughly English, and it is inconceivable that the pronouns "I" and "this," or the particles "of" and "as," should be replaced by equivalents of foreign extraction. In Pahlawi, however, the case is quite different. Haug goes, perhaps, a trifle too far when he says (*Essay on Pahlawi*, pp 120-121) "all the case signs and even the plural suffixes in the nouns, all the

personal, demonstrative, interrogative and relative pronouns ; all the numerals from one to ten ; the most common verbs (including the auxiliaries) such as 'to be, to go, to come, to wish, to eat, to sleep, to write, &c.', almost all the prepositions, adverbs, and conjunctions, and several important terminations for the formation of nouns, as well as a large majority of the words in general (at all events in the Sásánian inscriptions), are of Semitic origin ;" yet in the main such is the case, and "the verbal terminations, the suffixed pronouns and the construction of the sentence" are often the only Íránian part of the Pahlawí phrase, though they are its essential and characteristic part. But in addition to this we have a number of monstrous, hybrid words, half Aramaic, half Persian, which no rational being can imagine were ever really current in speech. Thus the Semitic root meaning "to write" consists of the three radicals K, T, B, and the third person plural of the imperfect is *yektibún* (Arabic, *yaktubún*), while the Persian verb is *nabishtan*, *napishtan*, or *navishtan*. The Pahlawí scribe, however, wrote *yektibún-tan*, but assuredly never so read it to him *yektibún*, though a significant inflected word in Aramaic, was a mere logogram or ideogram standing for *napish-*, to which he then added the appropriate Persian termination. So likewise for the Persian word *mard*, "man," he wrote the Semitic *gabrd*, but when he wished the alternative form *mar dum* to be read, he indicated this by the addition of the "phonetic complement," and wrote *gabrd-um*.

The analogies to this extraordinary procedure which exist in Assyrian have already been pointed out. In the older Túránian language of Akkad "father" was *adda*. "When the Assyrians," says Haug, "wished to write 'father,' they used the first character, *ad* or *at*, of *adda*, but pronounced it *ab*, which was their own word for 'father' ; and to express 'my father,' they wrote *atuya*, but read it *abuya*, *u* being the Assyrian nominative termination, and *ya* the suffix meaning 'my,' which, in the writing, were added to the foreign word

at" So in like manner the Pahlwī scribe who wished to write "father" wrote *abitār* for *pītar* (*pīdar*), the Assyrian *ab* being used as a mere ideogram, of which the Persian equivalent was indicated by the "phonetic complement" *tar*

(Another curious (and, in this instance, valuable) feature of the Pahlwī script was that in the case of a Persian word recognised at that time as compound and capable of analysis, each separate element was represented by a Semitic or Huzvārish equivalent. Take, for instance, the common Persian verb *pīndāshtan*, "to think, deem". A modern Persian has no idea that it is capable of analysis, or is other than a simple verb; but the Pahlwī scribe was conscious of its compound character, and wrote accordingly *pāvan* (= *pa*, "for") *hānd* (= *in*, "this"), *akhsānūn tan* (= *dāshtan*, "to hold") and Nöldeke has called attention to a similar analysis of the common word *magar* ("unless, "if not"), which is represented by two Aramaic words, or Huzvārish elements, of which the first signifies "not" and the second "if". And this principle has another curious and instructive application. The modern Persian pronoun of the first person singular is *man*, which is derived from the stem of the oblique cases of the corresponding Old Persian pronoun *adam* (= Avestic *azem*), whereof the genitive is *mand*. Of this fact the Pahlwī script takes cognisance in writing the Semitic *ll*, "to me" (or "of me"), as the Huzvārish equivalent of *man*.

These considerations, apart from external evidence, might have suggested to a very acute mind the belief that the peculiarities of Pahlwī lay almost entirely in the script, and that they disappeared when it was read aloud. Fortunately, however, there is sufficient external evidence to prove that this was actually the case.

First, we have the direct testimony of Ammianus Marcellinus, who says (xix, 2, 11) "*Persis Saporem et Saansarn [i.e., Shahdān shāh] adpellantibus et Pyrosen [i.e., Piruz or Peroz], quod rex regibus imperans et bellorum victor interpretatur*"

This notice refers to Shápúr II (A D 309-379), whose title stands on his coins *Malkán malká*, but was in the actual speech of the people, then as now, *Sháhán-sháh*

Secondly, we have the direct testimony of the learned author of the *Fihrist*, Muhammad b Isháq (A D. 987-8), who relies here, as in other places where he speaks of matters appertaining to Sásánian Persia, on the authority of that remarkable man

Ibnu'l Muqaffa', a Persian Zoroastrian who flourished about the middle of the eighth century of our era, made a doubtfully sincere profession of Islám, and was put to death about A D. 760. He was reckoned by Ibn Muqla, the *wazīr* and calligraphist († A H 939), as one of the ten most eloquent speakers and writers of Arabic, and Ibn Khaldún the Moor pays a similar tribute to his command of that language, and with this he combined a thorough knowledge of Pahlawí, and translated several important works from that language into Arabic, of which, unfortunately, only one of the least interesting (the *Book of Kalila and Dimna*) has survived to our time. Relying on the authority of this learned man, the author of the *Fihrist*, after describing seven different scripts (*Kitāba*) used in pre-Muhammadan times by the Persians, continues as follows, in a passage to which Quatremère first called attention in 1835, but of which the original text was not published till 1866, when Charles Ganneau printed it with a new translation and some critical remarks on Quatremère's rendering

"And they have likewise a syllabary [*hijá*, "a spelling," not *kitāba*, "a script"] called *Zawārishn* [or *Huzvarishn*], wherein they write the letters either joined or separate, comprising about a thousand vocables, that thereby they may distinguish words otherwise ambiguous. For instance, when one desires to write *gúsh*, which means 'meat,' he writes *bisrá* like this [here follows the word written in the Pahlawí script], but reads it as *gúsh* and similarly when one desires to write *nán*, which means bread, he writes *lahmá* like this [again follows the Pahlawí word], but reads it *nán*, and

so whatever they wish to write save such things as have no need of a like substitution which you write as they are pronounced

Thirdly, we have the fact of the complete disappearance of the whole Aramaic or Huzvârish element in even the earliest specimens of Persian written in the Arabic character, which could hardly have occurred if these words had ever been used in speech, but which was natural enough if they belonged to the script only, and were mere ideograms

Fourthly, we have the tradition surviving amongst the Zoroastrians to the present day, a tradition faulty enough in detail, as we have already seen, but quite clear on the general principle that Huzvârish words ought to be read as Persian. Hence the so called Pîzend and Parsî books, which are merely transcriptions of Pahlavî books into the unambiguous Avestic and Arabic characters respectively, all the Huzvarish, or Aramaic, words being replaced by their Persian equivalents, or supposed equivalents

It may be well that we should conclude this chapter with a recapitulation of the various terms that have been used in speaking of the ancient languages of Persia, an explanation of their precise meaning, and a statement of their etymology, where this is known

*Defin. of terms.* (*Medic*, the language of Media, *i e*, the western part of what we now call Persia, the *Mâda* of Darius's inscription, the *Mâhdât* (plural of *Mâdh*, which occurs as a prefix in *Mâh* Basra, *Mah* Kufa, *Mah* Nahâwand,

See Haug's *Essay on Pahlavî* pp 37 et seqq *Journal Asiatique* for 1835 (p 256) and 1866 (p 430) *Fihrist* ed Flügel p 14. I differ from Haug's rendering in several particulars especially as regards the sense of *mula hâbihât* which he translates [words] which have the same meaning whereas I take it to mean Persian words which would be ambiguous if written in the Pahlavî character but of which the Huzvarish equivalents are not so ambiguous. Any one who will write *ndn* in Pahlavî script and then consider in how many different ways it can be read will easily see where the ambiguity lies

&c.) of the early Arabian geographers, a region having for its capital the ancient Ecbatana (Hagmatána of the inscriptions), now called Hamadán. Of this language we have no remains, unless we accept Darmesteter's view, that it is identical with the language of the Avesta, or Oppert's, that it is the language which occupies the second place (between the Old Persian and the Assyrian versions) in the Achæmenian bilingual inscriptions. It was in all probability very closely akin to Old Persian, and certain words of it preserved by writers like Herodotus make it appear likely that from it are descended some of the modern dialects of Persian.

*Avestic*, the language of the Avesta, often improperly called "Zend," sometimes also termed "Old Bactrian," a most

*Avestic* undesirable name, since it is, as we have seen, quite as likely that its home was in Atropatene (Ázarbáyján) in the north-west as in Bactria in the north-east. In it is written the Avesta, and the Avesta only, of which, however, certain ancient hymns called *Gáthás* are in a different dialect, much more archaic than that in which the remaining portions of the book are composed. A special character, constructed from, but far superior to, the Pahlawí script, is used for writing it. The word Avesta can scarcely be traced back beyond Sásánian times, though Oppert believes it to be intended by the word *abastám* in Darius's Behistun inscription (iv, 64). It appears in Pahlawí as *Avisták* (Darmesteter, *Apasták*), in Syriac as *Apastágá*, in Arabic as *Abastáq*. Andreas is inclined to derive it from the Old Persian *upastá* ("help, support") and to interpret it as meaning "ground-text." This, at any rate, is its

"Zend" signification in the term "Avesta and Zend," which gave rise to the misleading "Zend-Avesta": the "Avesta" is the original text of the Zoroastrian scripture, and the "Zend" is the running Pahlawí "explanation" (translation and commentary) which generally accompanies it. If, therefore, the term "Zend

language' be used at all, it should mean the language of the Zend, or explanation, *i e*, the Pahlawi language, but as it was applied in Europe, owing to a misunderstanding of the terms, to the language of the original text, it is best to drop the expression "Zend language altogether }

*Old Persian* is the term which denotes the ancient language of Persia proper (Persis, Fars), the official language of the Achæmenian inscriptions, and without doubt the speech of Darius, Xerxes, and the other kings of this house. It is known to us by the inscriptions, and by them only.

( *Pahlawi*, as shown by Olshausen, properly means Parthian for as the ancient *mithra*, *chithra*, go into *mīhr*, *chīhr*, so

*Parthava*, the Old Persian name for Parthia, goes through the analogous but hypothetical forms *Parhav*, *Palhav*, into *Pahlav*, a term applied, under its Arabic form *Fahlav*, by the old Arabian geographers to a certain region of Central and Western Persia said to include the towns of Isfahan, Ray, Hamadan and Nahawand, and a part of Azarbāyjan. As has been already said, we know but little of the Parthians from native sources so little that it is not certain whether they were an Iranian or a Turānian race. The national legend takes so little account of them—whom it calls *Muluku t tawā'if*, "tribal kings"—that one single page of the *Shāhnama* amply suffices to contain all that Firdawsī (who speaks of them as illiterate barbarians unworthy of commemoration) has to say of them. And the Sasanian claim to have revived the national life and faith crushed by Alexander is to some extent borne out by the Greek inscriptions of the earlier Parthian coins, and the title "Phil Hellenes" which it pleased their kings to assume. Yet the name of the "Pahlavas" was known in India, and survives to the present day in Persia as an epithet of the speech and the deeds of the old heroic days—the days of the *pahlawāns*, "heroes, or mighty warriors." As applied

to the language, however, it has a much less precise signification in Persia than in Europe, where its application is definitely restricted to Sásánian or "Middle" Persian written in its appropriate script with the Aramaic or Huzvárish element of which we have spoken. But the "Pahlawí" in which Firdawsí's legendary monarchs and heroes indite their letters, the "high-piping Pahlaví" of 'Umar Khayyám and Háfiz, the *Fahlavíyyát*, or verses in dialect, cited in many Persian works, and the "Pahlawí" mentioned by Hamdu'llah Mustawfí of Qazwín, a historical and geographical writer of the fourteenth century, as being spoken in various parts of Persia, especially in the north-west, is a much less definite thing. Tahmúrath, "the Binder of Demons" (*Dív-band*), was the first, according to Firdawsí, to reduce to writing "not one but nearly thirty tongues, such as Greek (*Rúmí*), Arabic (*Tázi*), Persian (*Pársí*), Indian, Chinese and Pahlawí, to express in writing that which thou hearest spoken"<sup>\*</sup>. Now Tahmúrath was the predecessor of Jamshíd, the Yima of the Avesta and Yama of the Hindú books, an entirely mythical personage belonging to the common Indo-Íránian Legend, that is to say, to the remotest Aryan times, long before Avestic or Old Persian, let alone Middle Persian, were differentiated from the primitive Aryan tongue. When, on the other hand, a writer like the above-mentioned Hamdu'lláh Mustawfí says that "Pahlawí" is spoken in a certain village, he means no more than did a villager or Quhrúd (a district in the mountains situated one stage south of Káshán) who, in reply to the writer's inquiry as to the dialect there spoken, described it as "*Furs-i-qadím*," "Ancient Persian". With the Persians themselves (except the Zoroastrians) the term Pahlawí, as a rule, means nothing more precise than this, but in this book it is, unless otherwise specified, employed in the narrower acceptation of "Middle" or "Sásánian Persian". It is only so far Parthian that the earliest traces of it occur on the 'Abd Zohar and sub-Parthian coins

<sup>\*</sup> *Shahnama*, ed Macan, vol 1, p 18

of the third and fourth centuries before Christ, that is, during the Parthian period \*)

*Huzvârish*, *Zawarish*, or *Zawârishn* has been already explained, but the derivation of the word itself is more doubtful

Huzvârish

Many rather wild etymologies have been proposed, such as Dastur Hushangji's *huzvân dsur*, "tongue of Assyria, and Derenbourg's "*ha Sursi*" "this is Syriac" but Haug's explanation, that it is a Persian verbal noun from a verb *zuvaridan*, "to grow old, obsolete, or a similar verb, supposed by Darmesteter to have "grown old and obsolete" to such an extent that it is only preserved in its original sense in the Arabic *zawwara* (verbal noun *tazwir*), "he forced, concealed, distorted, or falsified [the meaning of a text], he deceived, tricked, misled, is the most probable

Anyhow a graphic system which writes, for example, "*aetuno yemalelunt aigh*" for words intended to be read "*etun goyand ku*" (which is the Pazend or Parsi equivalent of the Huzvarish) may fairly be described as a "forcing, "concealing" or "distorting" of the speech which it is intended to represent

(Just as *Zend* is the "explanation" of an Avestic text in Pahlawi, so is *Pazend* (= *paiti zainti*) a "re explanation" of a Pahlawi text by transcribing it into a character

✓ Paz d d  
P rsl. less ambiguous than the Pahlawi script, and substituting the proper Persian words for their

respective Huzvarish equivalents When the Avesta character is used for this transcription, the result is called "Pazend

when the Persian (i.e., the Arabic) character is adopted, the term "Parsi" is often substituted In either case the product is simply an archaic or archaistic (for unfortunately, owing to the defective character of the Parsee tradition, no great reliance can be placed on its accuracy in points of detail) form of "modern (i.e., post Muhammadan) Persian, from which the whole Aramaic element has disappeared Of several

See Haug's *Essay* pp 30-31 and West's article on *Pahlawi Literature* in vol II of the *Grundriss d Iran Philolo.*, p 72

books such as the *Mainyo-i-Khurad*, or "Spirit of Wisdom," we have both Pahlawí and Pázend or Pársí manuscripts,<sup>1</sup> but all genuine Pázend texts ultimately go back to a Pahlawí original (though in some cases this is lost), since naturally no "re-explanation" was felt to be needful until, from long disuse, the true nature of Pahlawí began to be forgotten, and the scribes and scholars skilled in its use became nearly extinct.

When we speak of *Modern Persian* or simply *Persian*, we merely mean post-Muhammadan Persian for the writing of which the Arabic character is used. "Old Modern Persian" (Achæmenian), "Middle Persian" (Sásánian), and "Modern Persian" (Musulmán) are terms quite analogous to the expressions "Old English" (*i.e.*, Anglo-Saxon), "Middle English," and "Modern English" now commonly used to denote the different stages of development of our own tongue. In this sense we may without objection apply the term "Modern Persian" to the language of poets like Rúdagí who flourished nearly a thousand years ago, just as we may say that Shakespeare wrote "Modern English"; but if the application of this epithet to a language which goes back at least as far as the ninth century of our era be disliked, we can only suggest that it should be called "Musulmán Persian," a term, however, which is not wholly beyond criticism. This language, as has been already pointed out, has changed less in ten centuries than English has in three, and archaisms of a distinctive character are almost confined to books composed before that great turning-point of Muhammadan history, the Mongol Invasion of the thirteenth century.

Before concluding this chapter, a few words may be fitly

<sup>1</sup> A facsimile of the Pahlawí text of the *Mainyo-i-Khurad* has been lithographed by Andreas (Kiel, 1882), the Pázend transcription has been printed in the Roman character with the Sanskrit version and an English translation and glossary by West (Stuttgart, 1871).

added concerning the dialects of Modern Persian, to which reference has already been repeatedly made. I mean dialects belonging to Persia proper, and confined to it, not the interesting Iranian tongues of Afghánistán, Baluchistan, Kurdistan and the Pamirs, together with Ossetic, concerning which full information and references will be found in the last portion of the first volume of the excellent *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie* of Geiger and Kuhn, to which reference has already been made so frequently. More work remains to be done here than in any other branch of Persian philology, notwithstanding the labours of Beresine, Dorn, Salemann, and especially Zhukovski in Russia, Geiger, Socin, Hubschmann, and Houtum Schindler in Germany, Huart and Querry in France, and, to a very small extent, by myself in England. These dialects, which will, without doubt, when better understood, throw an altogether new light on many dark problems of Persian philology, may be studied either orally on the spot (as has been done notably by Dorn in Mazandaran and Gilan, Zhukovski in Central Persia, especially in the Kashan and Isfahán districts, Socin in Kurdistan, Houtum Schindler at Yazd and Kirman, &c.), or in the scanty literary remains, which, nevertheless, are far more abundant than is generally supposed. (Of the poets who wrote in dialect on a large scale only two are widely and generally known, viz, Amír Pazawári (whose poems have been published by Dorn) in Mazandaran, and Baba Tahir i 'Uryan, whose quatrains (composed in what is variously described as "the dialect of Hamadan" or "the Luri dialect") are widely cited and sung in Persia, and have been repeatedly published there, as well as by Huart (with a French translation) in the *Journal Asiatique* for 1885. The popularity of Baba Tahir, who may be called the Burns of Persia, is due, no doubt, in large measure to the simplicity of his thoughts, the nearness of the dialect in which he writes to standard Persian, the easy and melodious flow of

Amir P. zawari  
d. Báb Tahir

his words, and their simple, uniform metre (that fully styled *Hazaj-i-musaddas-i-mahdhuf*, i.e., the hexameter *Hazaj*, of which the last foot in each hemistich is apocopated, or deprived of its last syllable, and which runs | u - - - | u - - - | u - - | four times repeated in the quatrain). Here are three of his best-known quatrains

## I

*Chū khush bī mīhrabūni az du sar bī,*  
*Kī yak-sar mīhrabūni dard-i-sar bī!*  
*Agar Majnūn dīl-i-shūrīdā'i dāshī,*  
*Dīl-i-Laylā az un shūrīdā tar bī!*

"How sweet is love on either side confessed!  
 One-sided love is ache of brain at best  
 Though Majnūn bore a heart distraught with love,  
 Not less distraught the heart in Laylā's breast!"

In this quatrain the only dialect-forms are *bī* (= *buwad*, "is, will be"), and the substitution (common to most of the dialects, and prevalent to a great extent in the standard Persian speech of the present day, especially in the South) of the *ū*-sound for *ā* in *un*, *mīhrabūnī*.

## 2.

*Magar shīr u palangī, ay dīl, ay dīl!*  
*Ba-mī dā'im bī-jangī, ay dīl, ay dīl!*  
*Agar dastum futī, khūnat vī-rīzhum*  
*Vī-vīnum tā chī rangī, ay dīl, ay dīl!*

"Lion or leopard fierce thou surely art,  
 Ever at war with us, O heart, O heart!  
 If I can catch thee, I will spill thy blood,  
 And see of what strange hue thou art, O heart!"

Here *ba-mī* = *bā mā*, "with us"; while *dastum*, *vī-rīzhum*, and *vī-vīnum* are equivalent respectively to *dastam* (for *bī-dastam*, "into my hand"), *bī-rīzam* ("I will shed"), and *bī-bīnam* ("I will see")

## 3

*Vi shum vishum a ln dlam ba dar shum !*  
*Vi shum a Chín u Má chín dir tar shum !*  
*Vi shum a Háyyán : Hay bi þursum*  
*As i dirí bas é já dir tar shum ?*

' Out of this world I will arise and fare  
 To China and beyond and when I'm there  
 I'll ask the Pilgrims of the Pilgrimage  
 Is here enough? If not direct me where!

Here *vi shum* = *bi shavam*, "I will go", *vdsham* = either *básham*, "I will stay, abide, or *bdz shavam*, "I will again go, or "I will go back", *dir tar* = *dur tar*, "further", *f* = *ln*, "this", *bas-é* = *bas ast*, "is enough"

Besides these, however, many other well known poets, such as Sa'di, Hafidh, Pindar or Bundár of Ray, Bus hâq (Abu Ishâq), the gastronomic poet and parodist of Shirâz, and others enumerated in my article in the *Royal Asiatic Society's Journal* for October, 1895 (pp 773-825), on "the Poetry of the Persian Dialects, composed occasional verses in various forms of patois, though these present, save in the best and most ancient manuscripts, so hopelessly corrupt a text that it is very difficult to make anything of them. One very good and ancient manuscript, dated A.H. 635, of a probably unique Persian work on the history of the Seljuqs, entitled *Kutûbu Râhatî : Sudur fî tawdrîkhi Kay Khusrâw wa Alî : Saljuq*, composed by Najmud Dîn Abu Bakr Muhammad b 'Alî b Sulaymán b Muhammad b Ahmad b al Husayn b Himmat ar Rawandî, and now forming part of the magnificent library of the late M. Charles Schefer, contains numerous *Tahlawiyât*, or verses in dialect, which appeared to me, on a cursory examination, to merit, in spite of their difficulty, a careful study on account of the age of the manuscript and the presumable correctness of the text.

In the notices of poets and poetesses (eighty nine in number) contained in ch. v, § 6 of Hamdu llâh Mustawfî's excellent

*Tārīkh-i-guzīda*, or "Select History," compiled in A.D. 1330, the following are mentioned as having composed verses in dialect (where such verses are actually cited, an asterisk is prefixed to the poet's name) : \*Abu'l-Májid Ráyagání of the Qazwín district (late thirteenth century), Amír Ká', also of Qazwín, \*Utánj Zanjání(?); Pindár or Bundár of Ray, \*Júláha ("the Weaver") of Abhar, \*Izzu'd-Dín of Hamadán, \*Káfí-i-Karachí (thirteenth century) The celebrated poet, traveller, and Isma'ílí propagandist Násir-i-Khusraw mentions in his Travels (*Safar-náma*, edited with a French translation by Schefer, Paris, 1881, p. 6 of the text) that on his westward journey in A.D. 1046 he was questioned by the poet Qatrán at Tabríz as to the meaning of certain verses in dialect of the poet Manjūk, so that we have definite proof that such dialect-poetry has existed in Persia from the eleventh century till the present day. Asadí's Persian Lexicon (*Lughat-i-Fars*), edited by Dr. Paul Hohn from the unique Vatican MS (Berlin, 1897), another eleventh century work, also cites here and there verses in dialect, called, as usual, "Pahlawí" Of prose works in dialect the two most remarkable are both heterodox, viz., the *Ḥáwídan-i-Kabir*, one of the principal books of the Hurúfí sect which arose in the days of Tamerlane (fourteenth century), and is partly written in a West Persian dialect,\* and a romantic history of the Bábí insurrection in Mázandarán in 1849, written in the dialect of that province, and published by Dorn, with a translation in vol. v of the *Mélanges Asiatiques* (St. Petersburg, 1866), pp. 377, *et seqq.*

The best-known dialects of Persian spoken at the present day are those of Mázandarán, Gílán, and Tálísh in the north; Samnán in the north-east, Káshán, Quhrúd, and Nái'n in the centre, with the peculiar Gabrí dialect of the Zoroastrians inhabiting Yazd,

List of the  
more important  
dialects

\* See my *Cat. of the Persian MSS. in the Cambridge University Library*, pp. 69-86, and my article in the *J. R. A. S.* for Jan., 1898 (pp. 61-94), on the *Literature and Doctrines of the Hurufi Sect*

Kirmán, Ráfsinján, &c , Síwand in the south , Luristan, Behbehán (which possesses a real poet, Rida qulí Khán by name), and Kúrdistan in the west but many other dialects, some entirely unknown to Europeans, doubtless exist in out of the way places Of those hitherto hardly studied the Bákhtiyarí idiom in the west and the Sístaní in the east most deserve careful attention

## CHAPTER III

### THE PRE-MUHAMMADAN LITERATURE OF THE PERSIANS, WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THEIR LEGENDARY HISTORY, AS SET FORTH IN THE BOOK OF THE KINGS

IN a book professing to treat of the literary history of any people in its entirety it would at first sight appear proper that each period and manifestation of the national genius should, as far as possible, receive an equal amount of attention. In the case of Persia, however, a complete survey of the whole ground could only be made at first hand either by a combination of specialists working together (as has been done in the truly admirable *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie* of Geiger and Kuhn, to which reference has already so often been made), or by a scholar of such varied and multiple attainments as can but rarely coexist in one man. Corresponding with the philological divisions already laid down, we have four separate literatures (though one is perhaps too scanty and limited in extent and character to deserve this title) which may fairly be called "Persian": to wit

(1) The Old Persian Cuneiform Inscriptions of the Achæmenian kings

(11) The Avesta (or rather the fragments of it which we still possess), including the more ancient Gáthás, written in a different and more archaic dialect, and believed by many to date from Zoroaster's own time

(iii) The Pahlawi literature, including the contemporary Sāsānian Inscriptions

(iv) The post Muhammadan, or "Modern Persian" literature of the last thousand years, which alone is usually understood as "Persian Literature"

To this last we must also add, for reasons advanced in Chap I (pp 3-4 *supra*),—

(v) That large portion of Arabic literature produced by Persians

Now, of the three more ancient languages and literatures above mentioned I can claim only a superficial and second hand knowledge, since the study of Modern Persian and Arabic is amply sufficient to occupy even the most active mind for a life-time. The other literatures lie quite apart, and primarily require quite different qualifications. For the student of Old Persian and Avestic a good knowledge of Sanskrit is essential, while a knowledge of Arabic, Muhammadan theology, and the like is of quite secondary importance. For the study of the first, moreover, a knowledge of Assyrian, and for the second, of Pahlawi, is desirable while Pahlawi, in turn, cannot be fruitfully studied save by one well versed in the Aramaic languages, especially Syriac and Chaldæan. Wherefore, since it behoves an author to write of what he knows at first hand, and since my knowledge of the pre Muhammadan languages and literatures of Persia is only such as (with the desire of extending and completing, as far as possible, my view of the people whose later history is my chosen study) I have derived from the writings of experts, I would gladly have confined the scope of this book to the post Muhammadan period, whereon alone I have any claim to speak with authority. Yet since every increase of knowledge makes one feel how much greater than one had supposed is the continuity of a nation's history and thought, and how much weaker are the dividing lines which once seemed so clear, I could not bring myself to mislead such as may read my book as to the true scope and unity of the

subject by such artificial and unnatural circumscription I began my Oriental studies with Turkish, and was soon driven to Persian, since from the Persians the Turks borrowed their culture and literary forms. Soon I found that without a knowledge of the Arabic language and literature and of the Arabian civilisation and culture one could never hope to be more than a smatterer in Persian. Still I thought of the Arab conquest of Persia and the conversion of the bulk of the Persians to the religion of Islām as a definite and satisfactory starting-point, as an event of such magnitude and of so revolutionary a character that it might fairly be regarded as creating practically a *tabula rasa*, from which all earlier writing had been expunged. But gradually it became apparent that this conception was very far from the truth, that many phenomena of the complex ‘Abbāsīd civilisation, of the early religious history of Islām, of the Book and Teaching of the Arabian Prophet himself, could only be understood in the light of earlier history.<sup>1</sup> Inevitably one is carried back from Muhammadan to Sāsānian times, from Sāsānian to Parthian, Achæmenian, Medic, Assyrian, primitive Aryan, and I know not what besides, until one is fain to exclaim with the Persian poet

*Mard-i khudmand-i-hunar-pîsha-râ*  
‘Umr du bāyast dar-in rūzgār,  
Tâ bi-yakī tajriba āmūkhī,  
Dar digarī tajriba burdī bi-kār!

“The man of parts who after wisdom strives  
Should have on earth at least a brace of lives,  
In one experience he then might learn,  
And in the next that same to profit turn!”

Therefore, unwilling on the one hand to speak much of matters wherein I have but little skill, and on the other to

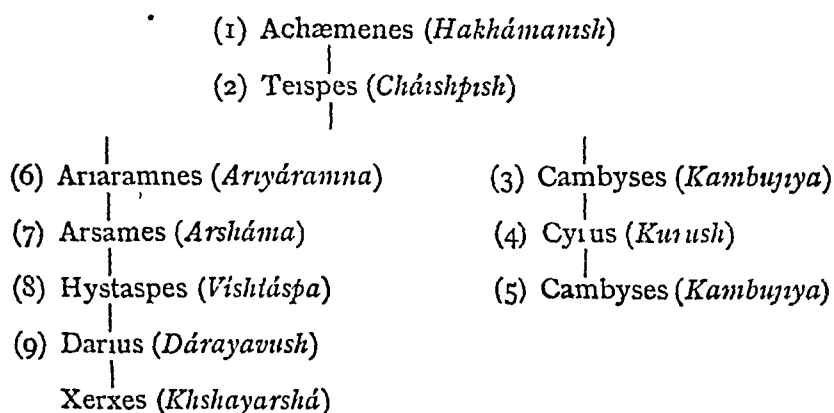
<sup>1</sup> On the influence of pre-Muhammadan systems, both political and religious, on the civilisation of al-Islam, von Kremer's writings are most suggestive, especially his little work entitled *Streifzüge auf den Gebiete des Islams*.

produce what I should regard as an essentially defective and misleading book, false to my conception of what is meant by the Literary History of a people, and faulty not only in execution but in conception. I have decided to set forth briefly in this chapter the main facts about the Achæmenian Inscriptions, the Avesta, the Pahlawî monuments and literature, and the Zoroastrian religion, to know which is important even for those whose main interest lies in Modern Persian. Of the Sâsânian period, and therefore incidentally of Pahlawî, the official language of that time in Persia, I shall speak in greater detail in the next chapter, since in it lie the roots of so much that attracts our attention in the early Muhammadan days, and the gulf which severs it from what precedes is so much harder to bridge satisfactorily than that which divides it from what follows. And since, for literary purposes, the legendary is nearly as important as the actual history of a people, I shall also discuss in this chapter the Persian Epos or National Legend which, as will be seen, only approaches the real National History at the beginning of the Sâsânian period. This chapter will therefore be divided into four sections, which may be briefly characterised as follows (1) Achæmenian, (2) Avestic (3) Pahlawî and (4) National Legend.

## § I LITERARY REMNANTS OF THE ACHÆMENIANS

Our fullest knowledge of that first great Persian dynasty which began with Cyrus in B.C. 559, and ended with the defeat of the last Darius by Alexander, and his tragic death at the hands of his two treacherous satraps, Bessus and Barzaentes, in B.C. 330, is derived from Greek historians, notably Herodotus, Ctesias, and Xenophon (*Anabasis*, *Cyropædia*, *Agésilas*), while some sidelights may be derived from such works as the *Persæ* of Æschylus. Of these external sources, however, which have been fully used by those who have written the history of the Achæmenians (such as Rawlinson, Spiegel, and Justi), I do

not propose to speak further, since they lie rather in the domain of the classical scholar than of the Orientalist. Rawlinson, however, in his admirable translation of Herodotus, points out how much the authority of that great historian is strengthened, not only by the Achæmenian inscriptions, but also by the true and convincing portraits of the national character which his work contains. But for him, indeed, the inscriptions, even if deciphered, must have remained obscure in many points which by his help are clear, as, for example, the words in ll 8-11 of the first portion of Darius's great Behistun inscription. "Saith Darius the king · 'Eight of my race who were aforetime were kings; I am the ninth. we are kings by double descent" [or, "in a double line"]. In the light of the following genealogical tree deducible from Herodotus ('Polymnia, vii, 10) the meaning of this becomes evident



Ordinarily, of course, Cyrus (B.C. 559-529) is reckoned the first king of the line, his son Cambyses (B.C. 529-522) the second, and Darius (B.C. 521-485) the third, but Darius himself counts his own ancestors up to Achæmenes, as well as the three kings (for he evidently includes Cambyses the father of Cyrus as well as Cambyses the son) of the collateral branch, and so the meanings of *duvitâtaranam*, "in a double line" (it was formerly translated "from a very ancient time"), and of Darius's "I am the ninth" become perfectly plain.

Any observant traveller who visits Persepolis and its surroundings will remark with some surprise that the inscriptions of the oldest period are the best preserved, while the most modern are the least legible. The Achæmenian cuneiform is so clear and sharp that we can hardly believe that nearly two thousand four hundred years have elapsed since the chisel which cut it rested from its labour. The Sāsānian (Pahlawî) inscriptions, though younger by some seven hundred and fifty years, are blurred and faint in comparison while the quite recent inscriptions in Modern Persian are almost obliterated. This seems to me a type of the three epochs represented by them, and to be reflected in the literary style of their contents. The great Darius is content to call himself "the Great King, the King of kings, King in Persia, King of the provinces, the son of Vishtâsp, the grandson of Arshâma, the Achæmenian." Shâpur the Sāsānian calls himself in the Pahlawî inscription at Hâjî âbâd, "the Mazda worshipping divine being Shahpuhar, King of kings of Îrân and non Îrân, of spiritual descent from God, son of the Mazda worshipping divine being Artakhshatr, King of kings of Îrân, of spiritual descent from God, grandson of the divine being Pâpak the King. As for the mass of empty, high sounding titles with which the most petty Persian rulers of later Muhammadan times thought it necessary to bedeck their names, they are but too familiar to every Persian student, and I will not weary others by such vain repetitions.

I have said that we should rather speak of the Achæmenian inscriptions as *historical* than as *literary* monuments of the Old Persian language, yet there is in them a directness, a dignity, a simplicity and straightforwardness of diction, which entitle us to regard them as having a real literary style. The portion of Darius's great inscription from Behistun translated at pp 31-32 *supra*, will serve as one specimen, and here is another, emanating from the same king, from Persepolis —

A great god is Aburamazda who hath created this earth who hath created that heaven who hath created man who created the

gladness of man, who made Darius king, sole king of many, sole lawgiver of many.

"I am Darius, the great King, the King of Kings, King of Lands peopled by all races, for long King of this great earth, the son of Vishtāsp, the Achæmenian, a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan of Aryan descent

"Saith Darius the King By the grace of Ahuramazda, these are the lands of which I held possession beyond Persia, over which I held sway, which brought me tribute, which did that which was commanded them by me, and wherein my Law was maintained Media, Susiana, Parthia, Harava [Heracl], Bactria [Bactria], Sughd, Khwārazm [Khiva], Drangiana, Arachosia, Thatagush [the Sata-gydæ], Gandara, India, the Haumavardā Sict and Tigrāhuda Sict, Babylon, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, Armenia, Cappadocia, Sparda, the Ionians, the Sacæ across the sea, Skudra, the crown-wearing Ionians,<sup>2</sup> the Putiya, the Kushiya, the Mithiya, the Karkis

"Saith Darius the King When Ahuramazda saw this earth . . ., then did He entrust it to me, He made me King, I am King, by the grace of Ahuramazda have I set it in right order, what I commanded them [*i.e.*, men] that was carried out, as was my Will If thou thinkest, 'How many were the lands which King Darius ruled?' then behold this picture they bear my Throne, thereby thou may'st know them Then shalt thou know that the spears of the men of Persia reach afar, then shalt thou know that the Persian waged war far from Persia

"Saith Darius the King What I have done, that did I all by the grace of Ahuramazda Ahuramazda vouchsafed me help till I completed the work May Ahuramazda protect me from , and [likewise] my House and these lands<sup>1</sup> For this do I pray Ahuramazda may Ahuramazda vouchsafe me this<sup>1</sup>

"O man! This is Ahuramazda's command to thee Think no evil, abandon not the right path, sin not!"

One curious phenomenon presented by one of the latest Achæmenian inscriptions (that of Artaxerxes Ochus, B.C. 361-336) deserves a passing notice Does some subtle connection exist between the decay of a language and the decay, or at least temporary subordination, of a race? I have

<sup>2</sup> This explanation is, I believe, now challenged Professor Cowell used to teach that it referred to the *κρωβυλος*, a crown of hair, fastened by a golden grasshopper, which was worn by the Athenians till the time of Thucydides.

heard it said by English scholars that already before the Battle of Hastings the Anglo-Saxon, or Old English, language had, to a great extent, ceased to be written grammatically, and that it was in full decadence before the Norman invasion. As regards the Old Persian language, at least, this appears to be beyond doubt and in the inscription to which reference is made above we find such errors in declensions and cases as *bumam* ("earth, acc case) for *bumim* *asmánám* ("heaven ' acc sing) for *asmánam* *shayátám* ("joy, acc sing) for *shiyátim* *martihyá* ("of men, gen pl) for *martiyahya* *khsháyathiya* ("king nom for acc sing), and the like. And concurrently with this decay of language appear signs of a degeneration in creed. Ahuramazda no longer stands alone, but is associated with other gods, Mithra (the Sun) and Anahita (Venus).

## § II THE AVESTA

We have already, in Chapter I, touched on some of the general questions connected with the origin, age, and home of the Avesta, and the language in which it is written—questions not admitting, unfortunately, of very precise or certain answers. Geldner's article on "Zoroaster" in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1888), and Darmesteter's French translation of the Avesta in the *Annales du Musée Guimet*, vols. xxi, xxii, xxiv (1892-3), may be taken as representing the two extreme views. According to the former, part of the Avesta at least (the Gathas) represented the actual utterances of Zoroaster or his immediate disciples. Bactria was the scene of his activity, and its language the vehicle of his teaching, the King Vishtasp (Gushtasp, Hystaspes), whom he converted, and who became the zealous patron and protector of his creed, "has no place in any historical chronology," "must have lived long before Cyrus," and "must be

<sup>D</sup> generation of  
<sup>la</sup> gu. g <sup>d</sup>  
<sup>cr</sup> d <sup>1</sup> test  
<sup>inscripti</sup> s.

<sup>G</sup> <sup>kin</sup> <sup>r'</sup> <sup>arli</sup>  
<sup>vi</sup> <sup>ws</sup> ( 838)

carefully distinguished from Hystaspes the father of Darius," and the period at which he flourished may have been anything from B.C. 1000 (Duncker) to B.C. 1400 (Gutschmid). According to the latter, the Zoroastrian scriptures of Achæmenian times (if they ever existed) entirely perished after Alexander's invasion; the construction of the Avesta (of which we now possess a portion only) began in the first century of our era, in the reign of the Parthian Vologeses I (A.D. 51-78), was continued under the Sásánians until the reign of Shápúr II (A.D. 309-379), and, in its later portion, was largely influenced by the Gnosticism of the Alexandrian or Neo-Platonist philosophy. Media was the home of the Zoroastrian doctrine, and the Median language its vehicle of expression, and the origin of the Zoroastrian creed goes back (as definitely stated in such Pahlawí books as the *Arda Viráf Námak* and the *Bundahish*) only to a period of three centuries or less before Alexander's time, that is, to the sixth or seventh century before Christ, or, in other words, to a period slightly more remote than the beginning of the Achæmenian dynasty.

The views advanced by Darmesteter, though they have not commanded general assent, have nevertheless greatly modified those of the other school, notably of Geldner, especially by causing them to pay much greater attention to the traditions embodied in the Pahlawí, Pársí, and early Muhammadan writings. Thus Geldner, in the interesting article on the Avesta contributed by him to Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss* (1896), while withholding his assent from some of Darmesteter's most revolutionary views as to the modern origin of the Avesta in the form known to us, attaches great importance to the Pársí tradition, identifies Zoroaster's King Hystaspes with the historical father of Darius, makes Zoroaster a contemporary of Cyrus the Great, fixes, accordingly, the earliest limit of the Avesta as B.C. 560, admits the destruction of the original

Darmesteter's  
later views  
(1893)

Geldner's later  
view (1896)

Avesta during the period separating Alexander's invasion from the reign of Vologeses I, who first began its reconstruction, a work renewed with vigour by Ardashir, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty, and allows that additions may have continued to be made to it till the reign of Shapur II (A.D. 309-379). He still holds, however, that the Gathas are not only the oldest portion of the Avesta, but represent the actual teachings and utterances of Zoroaster, of whose real, historical character he remains firmly persuaded, and adduces good historical evidence against Darmesteter's view that the Gathas are to be regarded as reflecting Alexandrian Gnosticism, or that the Vohu mano (Brahman) which appears so frequently in them owes its origin to the *λογος θειος* of Philo Judæus.

Since Anquetil's time it has been well known that the Avesta, as we now possess it, is only a fragment of the entire work which existed even in the Sasanian period. <sup>Th. A. la.</sup> while this in turn was "not more than a single priest could easily carry in his head" out of the Avesta "written with gold ink on prepared ox hides and stored up in Stakhar Papakan, which was destroyed by "the accursed Alexander the Roman." Yet the Vendidad, which constitutes a considerable portion of the existing Avesta, makes a fair sized volume, and it was but one of the twenty one *nosks* into which the Sasanian Avesta was divided, and of which the contents are in some measure known to us from the Pahlawi *Dinkard*, a very important work, dating, probably, from the ninth century of our era. These twenty one *nosks*, of which the Pahlawi names are known to us,<sup>1</sup> were divided equally into three groups—the *gdsánk* (mainly theological and liturgical), the *dátik* (mainly legal), and the *hátaḡ mansarík* (philosophical and scientific). Of the seven *nosks* constituting the first group (intended principally for the priests) we still possess fragments of three—the *Stot yasht*, the *Bako*, and the *Hátokht* of the second seven (intended for the laity) also three—the

See Geldner in the *Grundriss* vol. II pp. 16-20

*Vendidad*, and parts of the *Húspâram* and *Bakân-yasht*, while the third group, appealing to the more limited circle of learned and scientific men, has unfortunately (probably for that very reason) perished entirely. According to West's conjecture, these twenty-one *nosks*, which composed the Sásánian Avesta, contained in all about 347,000 words, of which we now possess only some 83,000, or about a quarter. Concerning the division above mentioned, Geldner remarks that it is "partly artificial, and is based on the attempt to establish a strict analogy between the whole Avesta and the *Ahuna-Vanya* verse, which is regarded as the quintessence and original foundation of the whole Avesta revelation" This remark

A curious  
analogy

suggests two interesting analogies with later times, and serves to illustrate what has been already said as to the remarkable persistence or recurrence of ideas in the East a phenomenon of which I have elsewhere spoken in greater detail The first of these is embodied in a Shí'ite tradition ascribed to 'Alí, which runs as follows

"All that is in the *Qur'án* is in the *Súratu'l-Fátíha* [the opening chapter], and all that is in the *Súratu'l-Fátíha* is in the *Bismi'lláh* [the formula 'In the name of God, the Merciful, the Forgiving,' which stands at the head of every chapter except one of the Muhammadan Scripture, and which is used by Muhammadans when entering on any undertaking], and all that is in the *Bismi'lláh* is in the *B* of the *Bismi'lláh*, and all that is in the *B* of the *Bismi'lláh* is in the point which is under the *B*, and I am the Point which is under the *B*"

The second is the further expansion and application of this idea by the Báb, the founder of the last great religious movement in Persia, who was put to death in 1850 at Tabriz, for he declared 19 the number of the letters in the *Bismi'lláh* to be the "Unity" (in Arabic *Wáhid*, "One," in which, curiously enough, the numerical values of the component letters add up to 19) which was at once the intelligible Mani-

festation of the Ineffable One and the proper numerical base of all computation, so that he made his books to consist of 19 "Unities, each containing 19 chapters, and the year to consist of 19 months of 19 days each (= 361 days)

The existing Avesta, as already said, contains but one complete *nask* out of the twenty one which it comprised in

✓ 

D	n	f	th
P	t	A	esta.

 Sasanian times, viz, the Vendidad while portions of at least four others enter into the composition of the Yasna, and other fragments are preserved in some Pahlawi books, notably the Huzvarnam in the Niranistan. The extant books and religious formulæ of the Avesta are divided into five chief groups or sections, which are as follows —

1 The *Yasna*, or liturgical portion, consisting of hymns recited in honour of the different angels, spirits, and divine beings. It comprises seventy two chapters (called *haits* or *ha*), symbolised by the seventy two strands which compose the *kushti*, or sacred girdle, investiture with which constitutes the formal admission of the young Zoroastrian to the Zoroastrian Church. In it are included the ancient Gathas to which reference has already been made.

2 The *Vispered*, comprising 23–27 chapters (called *karde*), is not an independent, coherent, and self contained book, but a collection of formulæ and doxologies similar and supplementary to the Yasna, in conjunction with which it is used liturgically.

3 The *Vendidad*, or "Law against the demons, is, in Geldner's words, "the Leviticus of the Pârsis, the Ecclesiastical Law book, which prescribes the priestly purifications, expiations, and ecclesiastical penances, and comprises twenty two chapters (*fargard*). Of these, the first, describing the successive creation by Ormuzd (Ahura Mazda) of the good lands, and the counter creation by Ahriman (Anro Mainyush) of a corresponding evil in each case, has been the chief basis of all discussion as to the

regions originally known to and inherited by the people of the Avesta

4 The *Yashts*, twenty-one in number (*cf* p 98, l. 5 *supra*), are hymns in honour of the various angels and spiritual beings, the *Amshaspands* and *Ízads*, one of whom presides over, and gives his name to, each of the thirty days which constitute the Zoroastrian month. Originally, as the *Páísís* hold, each of these had his appropriate *Yasht*; so that it would appear that nearly a third part of this portion of the Avesta has been lost. This mention of the Zoroastrian calendar reminds me of another illustration of

that resurgence of ancient religious beliefs and observances in the East of which I have already spoken. The Zoroastrian year comprises 12 months of 30 days each, to which are added 5 extra days, called the *gáthás*. The year, in short, is a solar year, comprising, like our own, 365 days, with a suitable arrangement for further intercalation. The modern Bábís, wholly Muhammadan in outward origin, and ultra-Shí'ite in their earlier stages of development, abandoned the Muhammadan lunar year (which falls short of the solar by about 11 days), and, taking as their numerical base their favourite number 19, substituted for it a solar year consisting of 19 months of 19 days each, making a total of 361 ( $= 19 \times 19$ ) days, which were supplemented as required to maintain the correspondence between the calendar and the real season, by some or all of the five extra days which represented the numerical value of the Báb's title ( $B = 2, \dot{A} = 1, B = 2$ ), and were, in the Bábí phrase, fixed "according to the number of the *Há,*" i.e., of the Arabic letter which stands for five. More than this, each day of the Bábí month, and each month of the Bábí year, is consecrated to, and derives its name from, some attribute, aspect or function of the Deity, just as each day and each month of the Zoroastrian year stand in a similar relation to one of the angelic beings who constitute the Zoroastrian

Another illustration of the resurgence in the East of ancient religious doctrines and observances

819 5913 911

spiritual hierarchy The only difference between the two systems—the most ancient and the most modern which Persia has produced—lies in the substitution of attributes for Angels by the Babis, and further in the fact that to only twelve of the thirty Amshaspands and Izads who preside over the days of the month are allotted months also, while with the Babis the same nineteen names serve for both purposes. In both calendars the week plays no part in both it happens once in each month that the same name indicates both the month and the day and in both cases such days are observed as festivals. Yet it is most improbable that the Bab, who was a Sayyid, and, ere he announced his Divine mission (A D 1844), an ultra zealous Shi'ite, holding all unbelievers as unclean and to be sedulously avoided (he enjoins in the Persian *Bayân* the expulsion of all who refuse to accept his doctrine, save such as are engaged in avocations useful to the community, from the five principal provinces of Persia), had, or would have condescended to acquire, any direct knowledge of the Zoroastrian religion and practices and the same applies to the many striking analogies which his doctrine, and even phraseology, present with those of the Isma'ilis and other older sects so that we are almost driven to regard a certain circle of religious and philosophical ideas as endemic in Persia, and liable at any moment, under a suitable stimulus, to become epidemic. To this point we shall have repeated occasion to recur later.

5 The *Khorda Avesta*, or 'Little Avesta,' is a kind of prayer book or religious chrestomathy compiled for the use of the laity in the reign of Shapur II (A D 310-379) by the priest, Adharpadh Mahraspand. It consists partly of selections from the whole Avesta, partly of formulæ written in Pazend (see pp 81-2 *supra*) and comprises the five *Nyayishes* (prayers addressed to the Sun, the Moon, Mithra, the Genius of the Water, and the Bahram Fire), the five *Gâhs* the greater and lesser *Sruza* ("thirty days"), and the four *Afringan*, or blessings. 10919

Th Kh da  
A est

Such, with the independent fragments preserved in Pahlawí books like the *Nirangistán* (chief amongst which are the *Aogemadaêcâ* and *Hádôkht-nosh*), is that remnant of the Zoroastrian scriptures which we now know as the Avesta. Intensely interesting though it be as an ancient document embodying the doctrines of so celebrated a person as Zoroaster, and the tenets of an old-world faith which once played an important part in the world's history, and which, though numbering at the present day not ten thousand adherents in Persia, and not more than ninety thousand in India,<sup>1</sup> has profoundly influenced other religions of intrinsically greater importance, the Avesta cannot be described as either pleasant or interesting reading. It is true that the interpretation of many passages is doubtful, and that better understanding might lead to higher appreciation of these, but, speaking for myself, I can only say that while my appreciation of the Qur'án grows the more I study it and endeavour to grasp its spirit, the study of the Avesta, save for philological, mythological, or other comparative purposes, leads only to a growing weariness and satiety. The importance of its place in the history of religious thought, as well as its interest from an antiquarian and philological point of view, will ever attract to it a certain number of devoted students, apart from those who regard it as a Revelation and a Law from God; but to me it is doubtful whether any translation of it could be made which the ordinary reader of average curiosity and intelligence would be willing to read through from cover to cover, save for some special purpose. At any rate the number of translations into English, French, and German is sufficiently large to enable any one who chooses to try the experiment for himself, and the citation of selected passages in this place appears quite superfluous.

REVIEW of the  
Avesta as a  
whole

<sup>1</sup> See Mademoiselle D. Menant's *Les Parsis* (Paris, 1898), pp. 52-56

### § III THE PAHLAWI LITERATURE

The earliest traces of the Pahlawi language (of which as already pointed out, the apparent mingling of Semitic and Iranian words, brought about by the use of the Huzvarish system, is the essential feature) occur as first pointed out by Levy of Breslau in 1867<sup>1</sup> on sub Parthian coins of the end of the fourth and beginning of the third century before Christ—in other words, soon after the end of the Achæmenian period, and Pahlawi legends are borne by the later Parthian, all the Sāsānīan, and the early Muhammadan coins of Persia, including amongst the latter the coins struck by the independent Ispahbads of Tabaristān, as well as those of the earlier Arab governors (The Pahlawi coin legends extend, therefore from about B.C. 300 to A.D. 695, when the Umayyad Caliph ‘Abdu l Malīk abolished the Persian currency and introduced a coinage bearing Arabic legends<sup>2</sup>).

The Pahlawi inscriptions date from the beginning of Sāsānīan times, the two oldest being those of Ardāshīr and Shapur, the first and second kings of that illustrious house (A.D. 226–241 and 241–272) and they extend down to the eleventh century, to which belong the inscriptions cut in the Kanheri Buddhist caves in Salsette near Bombay by certain Parsis who visited them in A.D. 1009 and 1021. Intermediate between these extremes are ten signatures of witnesses on a copper plate grant to the Syrian Christians of the Malabar coast. The grant itself is engraved in old Tamil characters on five copper plates, and a sixth contains the names of the twenty five witnesses attesting it, of which eleven are in Kufic Arabic, ten in Sasanian Pahlawi, and four in the Hebrew character and Persian language<sup>3</sup>.

ZDMG xxi pp 421–465

See the Arab historians—e.g. Dinawarī (ed Guirgass 1889) p 3

<sup>3</sup> See Haug's *Essay on Pahlawi* pp 80–8. West's article on *Pahlawi Literature in the Grundriss* vol ii p 79 and the references there given

Of the age of the Pahlawí literature, properly so called, we have already spoken (pp 7-8 *supra*). It was essentially the Persian literature of the Sásánian period, but was naturally continued for some time after the fall of that dynasty. Thus the *Guyastá Abólsh námat*, to which reference has already been made, narrates a discussion held between an orthodox Zoroastrian priest, Átur-farnbag son of Farrukh-zád, and a heretical dualist (perhaps a Manichæan) in the presence of the 'Abbásid Caliph al-Ma'mún (A.D. 813-833), so that the period to which this literature belongs may be considered to extend from the third to the ninth or tenth centuries of our era, at which time the natural use of Pahlawí may be considered to have ceased, though at all times, even to the present day, learned Zoroastrians were to be found who could compose in Pahlawí. Such late, spurious Pahlawí, however, commonly betrays its artificial origin, notably by the confusing of the adjectival termination *-ih* with the nominal or substantival termination *-ih*, both of which are represented by *-i* in Modern Persian

Of actual written Pahlawí documents, the papyrus-fragments from the Fayyúm in Egypt, which West supposes to date from the eighth century of our era, are the most ancient, and after them there is nothing older than the MS. of the Pahlawí Yasna known as "J 2," which was completed on January 25, A.D. 1323. Pahlawí manuscripts naturally continue to be transcribed amongst the Pársís down to the present day, though since the introduction of Pahlawí type, and the gradual publication by printing or lithography of the more important books, the function of the scribe, here as in the case of other Eastern languages, has in large measure fallen into abeyance

The Pahlawí literature is divided by West, who is certainly the greatest living authority on it, and who is in this portion of our subject our chief guide, into three classes, as follows

Pahlawí  
literature

Pahlawí  
manuscripts

Extent and  
character of  
the Pahlawí  
literature

✓ 1 *Pahlawi translations of Avesta texts*, represented by twenty-seven works, or fragments of works, estimated to contain in all about 141,000 words<sup>1</sup>. Valuable as these are for the exegesis of the Avesta, they "cannot be really considered," in West's words, "as a sample of Pahlawi literature, because the Parsi translators have been fettered by the Avesta arrangement of the words"

✓ 2 *Pahlawi texts on religious subjects*, represented by fifty-five works estimated to contain about 446,000 words. This class contains besides commentaries, prayers traditions (*riwāyats*), admonitions, injunctions, pious sayings, and the like, several important and interesting works amongst which the following deserve particular mention. The *Dinkart* ('Acts of Religion'), "a large collection of

Th D <sup>9th</sup> kart (9th century). information regarding the doctrines, customs, traditions, history and literature of the Mazda worshipping religion, of which the compilation was begun in the ninth century of our era by the same Ātur farnbag who appears before al Mamun as the champion of orthodox Zoroastrianism against "the accursed Abalish, and concluded towards the end of the same century<sup>2</sup>. The *Bundahishn* ("The Ground giving"), an extensive manual of religious knowledge<sup>3</sup> comprising, in the fuller recession known as the "Iranian, forty-six

chapters, which appears to have been finally concluded in the eleventh or twelfth century of our era, though the bulk of it is probably a good deal earlier. The *Datistān i Dīnk*, or "Religious Opinions" of Manushchihar son of Yudan Yim, high priest of Pars and Kerman in the latter part of the ninth century, on ninety-two

The full enumeration of these and the following will be found in West's article in the *Grundriss* already referred to

A very full analysis of its contents is given by West *op cit* pp 91-98

<sup>3</sup> For translation see West's *Pahlawi texts* in vol. v of the *Sacred Books of the East* pp 1-151 (Oxford 1880). For analysis of contents see West's article in the *Grundriss* pp 100-10

topics, characterised by West as "one of the most difficult Pahlawí texts in existence, both to understand and to translate." The *Shikand-gúmaník Vjār* † ("Doubt-dispelling Explanation"), a controversial religious work, composed towards the end of the ninth century, in defence of the Zoroastrian dualism against the Jewish, Christian, Manichæan, and Muhammadan theories of the nature and origin of evil; and described by West as "the nearest approach to a philosophical treatise that remains extant in Pahlawí literature." The *Dīn-i-Mainyo* [or *Mānīg*] -i-*Khīrad* ("Opinions of the Spirit of Wisdom") contains the answers of this spirit to sixty-two inquiries on matters connected with the Zoroastrian faith. The publication of the Pahlawí text by Andreas (Kiel, 1882), and of the Pázend text with Nériosengh's Sanskrit translation by West (Stuttgart, 1871), who has also published English translations of both texts (1871 and 1885), render it one of the most accessible of Pahlawí works, and as pointed out by Noldeke in his translation of the *Kárnamak-i-Artakhshatr-i-Pápakán*, one of the best books for beginning the study of book-Pahlawí. The *Arda-Vīraf Námak* is another very well-known work, accessible in the original (Bombay, 1872) and in English and French translations, and may be briefly described as a prose Zoroastrian *Paradiso* and *Inferno*. It is interesting for the picture it gives of the religious and material anarchy in Persia produced by the invasion of "the accursed Alexander the Roman," of the Sásánian national and religious revival in the third century of our era, and of the Zoroastrian ideas of the future life. In the latter we can hardly fail to be struck by the analogy between the Chinvat Bridge and the Muhammadan

† Translated by West in vol. xxiv of the *Sacred Books of the East* series (Oxford, 1885), pp. 115-251, and published in Pázend by the same scholar in conjunction with the Pársí Hoshang in 1887.

Bridge of Širāt, "finer than a hair and sharper than a sword, to which Byron alludes in the well known lines—

By Allah I would answer Nay !  
 Though on 't Sirat's bridge I stood  
 Which totters o'er the burning flood  
 With Paradise within my view  
 And all its hours beckoning through

And these *h-uris* also seem to find their more spiritual prototype in the fair maiden who meets the departed soul of the righteous man, and who, on being questioned, declares herself to be the embodiment of the good deeds, the good words, and

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𐭠𐭣𐭥𐭥𐭥𐭥

the good thoughts which have proceeded from him during his life. The "*Book of the accursed Abilish*," already mentioned more than once, was

published by Barthélemy in 1887, with the Pazend and Pârsi Persian versions and a French translation. The *Šām is-p-n imak*, known in its entirety only in Pazend and Persian versions, contains some interesting mythological and legendary matter

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𐭠𐭣𐭥𐭥𐭥𐭥

about the ancient mythical kings of the Persian Epos. The *Andaraz* : *Ahusratw* : *Kawādan*, or

dying injunctions of King Nushirwan (Anoshak ruban, A.D. 531-578) to his people, though of very small extent, deserves mention because it has been taken by Salemann in his *Mittelpersische Studien* (*Mélanges Asiatiques*, ix, pp. 242-253, St. Petersburg, 1887) as the basis of a very interesting and luminous study of the exact fashion in which a Pahlawi text would probably have sounded when read aloud, an ingenious attempt at a critical Pazend transcription.

3. *Pahlawi texts on non-religious subjects*, represented by only eleven works, comprising in all about 41,000 words. This class of Pahlawi literature is at once the most

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𐭠𐭣𐭥𐭥𐭥𐭥

interesting and the least extensive. A large non-theological literature no doubt existed in Sasanian times, and many works of this class no longer extant (notably the *Ahūdhrāy nāmak*, or "Book of Kings," which will be dis-



though the contents or titles of others are known to us through Arabic writers (such as Mas'udi, Dinawari, and the author of the invaluable *Fihrist*), while the substance of one, the *Book of the Gests and Adventures of Bahrdm Chubin*, has been in part reconstructed by Professor Noldeke (*Geschichte der Sasaniden*, Leyden, 1879, pp 474-487) The remaining books of this class (mostly of small extent) are (5) *The Cities of Iran* (6) the *Wonders of Sagistan* (7) the *Dirakht i Asurlg*, or "Tree of Assyria", (8) the *Chatrang ndmak*, or "Book of Chess" (9) *Forms of Epistles* (10) *Form of Marriage Contract*, dated to correspond with November 16, A D 1278 and (11) the well known *Farhang i Pahlawik*, or "Old Pahlawi Pāzend Glossary", published at Bombay and London by Hoshang and Haug in 1870

Besides the Pahlawi literature, there also exists a modern Persian Zoroastrian literature, of which the most important works are the *Zartushtnāma* ("Book of Zoroaster") in verse, composed at Ray in Persia in the thirteenth century, the *Sad dar* ("Hundred Chapters"), a sort of epitome of the Zoroastrian faith in three recensions (one prose, two verse), of which the first is the oldest the '*Ulama i Islām* ("Doctors of Islām") the *Rūdāyāt*, or collections of religious traditions the *Qissa i Sanjān*, or narrative of the Zoroastrian exodus to India after the Muhammadan conquest of Persia and several Persian versions of Pahlawi texts These are discussed by West in an Appendix to his article in the *Grundriss* (pp 122-129) I know of no literary activity amongst the Persian Zoroastrians of Yazd and Kirman in recent times, and though amongst themselves they continue to speak the peculiar Gabri dialect already mentioned, their speech in mixed society scarcely differs from that of their Muhammadan fellow citizens, and their letters are entirely copied from the ordinary models

The question of the existence of poetry in Sāsānian times

discussed at pp. 14-16 *supra*. If it has been already discussed, so far as is known, have existed, no remedy.

ready pointed out, the substance of a certain number of Pahlaví works which have perished is preserved by some Muhammadan writers, especially Arabic historians (that is, Arabic-writing, for the earlier Arabic writers were Persians by race), such as Tabarí, and the like, who drew for the most part from Arabic translations of Pahlaví books, such as Ibnu'l-Muqaffá', who were well acquainted with both languages. Of such translations a considerable number are enumerated in the *Fihrist*, but Ibnu'l-Muqaffá's rendering of *Kallila and Dimna* (brought from India in the time of Nushírwán "the Just," together with the game of Chess, and translated for him into Pahlaví) is almost the only early Arabic work which has survived in its entirety. Amongst the early Arabic writers, the best informed on Persian topics include, besides Tabarí († A.D. 923), al-Jáhidh-Kisrawí († A.D. 870), Ibn Qutayba († A.D. 869), al-Ya'qúbí († A.D. 900), Dínawarí († A.D. 895), al-Bíróní (end of tenth century), al-Baládhurí († A.D. 892), the *Fihrist*, Muḥammad b. Isháq (end of tenth century), and others. Amongst Persian works, Ralám's history (A.D. 963), the anonymous *Sháhnámeh*, and Firdawsí's great epic, the *Sháhnámeh*, shall speak immediately, are perhaps the most important from this point of view.

## V. THE PERSIAN NATIONAL EPIC.

§ We have spoken chiefly of the real history of Hitherto we have spoken chiefly of the real history of Ancient Persia, as derived from the oldest and most credible

sources—inscriptions, coins, and the writers of antiquity. It is now necessary that we should briefly examine the ideas that the Persians themselves entertain as to the dynasties and kings who ruled over them in days of old—in other words, the National Legend, which only begins to run parallel with actual history at the beginning of the Sasanian period. This National Legend finds its ultimate development in the celebrated epic of the *Shahnama*, or “Book of Kings,” an immense poem, generally computed at about 60,000 couplets, composed by Firdausi for Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, and completed, after some forty years of labour, in the year A.D. 1010. As a literary work this great epic will be more properly discussed in a later chapter, but, since it remains till the present day the chief source whence the Persians derive their ideas as to the ancient history of their nation it will be proper to discuss briefly in this chapter both the nature and antiquity of its contents. This matter has been treated in a most exhaustive and scholarly manner by Professor Noldeke of Strassburg in his article entitled *Das Iranische Nationalepos*, contributed to vol. II of Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss*, and also published in separate form (Trubner, Strassburg, 1896). Of this excellent work, which probably represents the limit of knowledge attainable in this direction, the freest use is made in the brief account here given of the history of this National Legend or Saga.

The *Shahnama* recognises four dynasties of pre Muham-  
 madan Persian kings—the *Plshaddi*, the *Kayani*, the *Ashkani*  
 (or Parthian, also called in Arabic *Mulukut*  
 Cont. t f th  
 Sh h ima *Tawd if*, or “Tribal Kings”), and the *Sasani*.

Of these, the two first are entirely unhistorical, belonging, as we have already said, to the mythology of the Avesta and the common Indo-Iranian legend, the third is historical in a sense, but nothing is remembered of it save a few names, mentioned without much order or method, and the fact that it filled the gap between Alexander the Great and

Ardashír the first Sásánian ; the fourth is wholly historical in the sense that the kings composing it are historical personages arranged in correct order, though naturally their deeds and adventures contain much legendary matter, especially in the earlier portion

The first king of the legendary Píshdádí dynasty, called *Gayúmarth*, is the first man of the Avesta, *Gayô Mareta*, the Zoroastrian Adam. He dwells in the mountains, dresses himself and his people in leopard-skins, brings the beasts of the field into subjugation, wages a war on the demons, in which his son *Siyámak* is killed, and, after a reign of thirty years, dies, and is succeeded by his grandson *Húshang* (Arabic *Úshhanj*). *Húshang* reigns forty years, accidentally discovers how to produce fire by flint and steel, and establishes the Festival of Sadah to commemorate this great discovery. He is succeeded by his son *Tahmrath*, called *Div-band*, "the Binder of Demons," since he brought these beings into subjection, but spared their lives on condition that they should teach him the art of writing "not one but nearly 30 languages"<sup>1</sup>. After reigning thirty years he is succeeded by his son *Jamshíd*, a much more important figure in the Persian Legend than any of his predecessors.

The early Arab (*i.e.*, Arabic-writing) historians, who for the most part endeavour to combine the Iránian with Semitic and Biblical legends, commonly identify *Jamshíd* with Solomon. Practically speaking nearly all the Achæmenian monuments about Persepolis are referred by the Persians to these kings, and apparently for no better reason than the following. "These gigantic buildings," they say, "are evidently beyond the power of the unaided humanity of that age ; therefore whoever built them was helped by the demons. But it is a well-known fact that only two kings had command over the demons, namely Solomon and *Jamshíd* ;

<sup>1</sup> See Macan's ed. of the *Shahnama*, p. 18

therefore Solomon and Jamshid built these monuments' Accordingly they call Persepolis *Takht i Jamshid* "the Throne of Jamshid", the Tomb of Cyrus, *Masjid i Madar i Sulayman*, "the Mosque of Solomon's Mother", and another platform like structure on a hill adjacent to the monuments in the Murghab plain *Takht i Sulayman* "the Throne of Solomon". Such identifications were favoured by the Zoroastrians in Muhammadan times as tending to improve their position with their conquerors, and secure for them the privileges accorded by victorious Islam to "the people of the Book"—that is, peoples like the Jews and Christians who, though not believers in the Qur'an, possessed Scriptures recognised by Muhammad. The most notable of these false identifications is that of Zoroaster with Abraham, and of the Avesta with the *Suhuf* ("Leaflets" or "Tracts") supposed by the Muhammadans to have been revealed to him, and recognised by them as one of the five revelations made to the five great Prophets, the other four being the Pentateuch (*Tawrat*) of Moses, the Psalms (*Zubur* or *Mazamlr*) of David, the Gospel (*Injil*) of Jesus Christ, and the *Qur'an* of Muhammad. But of course well informed writers like *Ibnul Muqaffa'* knew that these identifications were wrong, just as well as we now know that Sir William Jones's identifications of Kay Khusraw and Shiruye with Cyrus and Xerxes are wrong. Thus *Ibnul Muqaffa'* (quoted by Dinawari, ed Guirgass, p. 9) says "Ignorant Persians, and such as have no science, suppose that King Jam was Solomon the son of David, but this is an error, for between Solomon and Jam was an interval of more than 3,000 years. It is now well known that Jam (the termination—*shid*, frequently dropped, is a mere epithet or title, as it is in *Khurshid*, "the Sun, representing the Avestic *Khshaeta*, "chief, sovereign brilliant") is identical with the *Yama* of the Hindu and the *Yima* of the Avestic mythology, though this hero of the Indo-Iranian legend appears under rather different aspects in the three cases. With

the Hindús, he is the first great mortal to pass over into the After-world, and hence appears as a kind of Pluto, or King of Hades. In the Avesta he is "the fair Yima of goodly flocks," the son of *Vivanhão* (a name which, though absent from the *Sháhnáma*, occurs in early Muhammadan historians like Dínawarí and Tabarí as *Vivanhán*, described as son of Írán or Arfakhshad, son of Sám or Shem, son of Noah), who is invited, but declines, to be the bearer of Ahura Mazda's message to mankind, and who is commissioned to build "the four-cornered Varena" for the protection of his people from the plague of cold created by Anra Mainyush (Ahriman), the Evil Spirit. In the *Sháhnáma* he appears as a great king, who reigns for 700 years, not only over men, but over demons, birds, and fairies, invents weapons of war and the textile art; teaches men the use of animals, institutes the priestly, military, agricultural, and artisan classes, compels the demons to practise architecture, introduces the use of precious stones and metals, perfumes, and medicines, builds ships, causes himself to be transported (like Solomon in the Muhammadan legend) on an aerial throne whithersoever he will, and establishes the great national festival of the *Nawrúz*, or New Year's Day, at the vernal equinox, when the Sun enters the sign of Aries. Thereupon his luck turns, for he becomes so inflated with pride as to claim divine honours, whereon he is overthrown and ultimately slain by the usurper *Dahák*.

This *Dahák* represents the snake *Azhi Daháka* (later *Azhdahák*, *Azhdahá*, "a dragon") of the Avesta, and, with the two snakes growing from his shoulders which  
 Azhidahál or Dahák      require a daily meal of human brains, stands for the three-headed dragon of other Aryan mythologies. By Firdawsí (in whose time the memory of the Arab Conquest was still alive, and race hatred still ran high) he is metamorphosed into an Arab, and his name is consequently given an Arab form, *Dahháka* (with the hard Arabic *d* and *h*); he appears as a parricide, tyrant, and chosen instrument of the

Devil, who beguiles him from the primitive and innocent vegetarianism supposed to have hitherto prevailed into the eating of animal food and ultimate cannibalism. His demand for fresh victims to feed his snakes ultimately, after he has reigned nearly a thousand years, drives his wretched subjects into revolt, to which they are chiefly incited by the blacksmith Kawa, whose leathern apron, by a patriotic apotheosis becomes the standard of national liberty. The young *Feridun* (Avestic *Thraetaona*, Indian *Thraitaṇa*), son of *Abtin*, a descendant of *Tahmurath* and “of the seed of the Kayan, is brought forth from his hiding place and hailed as king. He defeats *Dahak*, and chains him alive, Prometheus like, in a cave at the summit of Mount *Damāvand* (or *Dunbāwand*), the great conical peak of which is so clearly visible to the north east of *Tihran*, after which, amidst general rejoicings, he becomes king, and rules with great justice and splendour for five hundred years, so that of him it is said—

Ferd n.

*Fari dun i farrukh farishla na bud*  
*Zi muslik u zi anbar sarishla na bud*  
*Bi dād u dahish yāft ān niku*  
*Tu dād u dahish kun Faridun tu!*

*Feridun* the fortunate was not an angel  
 He was not compounded of musk and of ambergris  
 By justice and bounty he attained such excellence  
 Be thou just and bountiful and thou shalt be a *Feridun*!

Yet for all this he was not exempt from bitter trouble in his own house. Having given his three sons in marriage to the three daughters of *Saru* (or *Surv* according to al Bundarī's Arabic prose translation of the *Shāhnāma*, made about A.D. 1223),<sup>1</sup> he divided between them his vast dominions giving to *Íraj*, the youngest, the land of Iran (*Éran shahr*). His other two sons, *Salm* and *Tur*,

Ferd  
as three

Cambridge MS Qq 46 a fine old fourteenth century MS of this important compilation concerning which see Noldeke's *Das Iranische Nationalepos* p 77 and n 2

regarding this as the choicest portion of the heritage, were filled with envy, and eventually, by a dastardly stratagem, succeeded in compassing the death of their younger brother. His body is brought to Ferídún, who bitterly laments his death, and swears vengeance on Túr and Salm.

Some time after the murder of Íraj, his wife *Máh-áfarid* bears a son, named *Manúchíhr*, who, on reaching mature age, attacks and kills his wicked uncles, and sends their heads to Ferídún. Soon after this, Ferídún abdicates in favour of Manúchíhr, and shortly afterwards dies

The three sons of Ferídún may be roughly described as the Shem, Ham, and Japhet of the Íránian legend, and from this fratricidal strife date the wars between the sons of Túr (the Túránians or Turks), long led by the redoubtable *Afrásiyáb*, and those of Íraj (the Íránians)

wars which fill so great a part not only of the legendary, but of the actual history of Persia. At this point the National Epic begins to be enriched by a series of episodes whereof the Avesta shows no trace, and which are connected with a series of heroes

belonging to a noble family of Sístán and Zábulistán, viz., Naríman, Sám, Zál, Rustam, and Suhráb. Of these Rustam is by far the most important. For centuries he plays the part of a *deus ex machinâ* in extricating the Persian Kayání monarchs especially Kay Qubád, Kay Ká'ús, and Kay Khusraw from their difficulties and dangers, while, with his good horse *Rakhsh*, he plays the chief part in a series of heroic adventures in combats with men and demons. His death is only compassed at last by a treacherous stratagem of his brother, after he has slain

*Isfandiyár* (*Isfandiyádh*, *Spandedát*), the son of *Gushtásp* (*Ulshtáspa*), the champion of Zoroaster. Spiegel supposes <sup>1</sup> that Rustam's name was deliberately suppressed in

<sup>1</sup> *Asiatische Studien*, p. 126

the Avesta as an adversary of "the good Religion," but Noldeke<sup>1</sup> thinks this improbable, and inclines rather to the view that the Sistan legend to which he and his ancestors belong was almost or quite unknown to the authors of the Avesta. At any rate Rustam's name has only been found in one or two places in late Pahlawi writings, though his doughty deeds were known to the Armenian Moses of Khorene in the seventh or eighth century, and the stall of his horse Rakhsh was shown about the same period to the Arab invaders of Sistan.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the Persian general who was defeated and slain by the Arabs in the fatal battle of Qadisiyya (A.D. 635) was a namesake of the great legendary hero.

(The death of Rustam brings us nearly to the end of the Kayāni, or purely mythical period of the Epic.) Isfandiār,

the son of Gushtasp, leaves a son named *Bahman* (Vohumano), who succeeds his grandfather. In the later construction of the Epic this Bahman

was identified with Artaxerxes (*Artakhshatr*, *Ardashlr*) Longi-

manus (*Μαροχαιρ*, *Dirdz dast*),<sup>3</sup> who was known through some Syriac writer drawing his material from Greek sources. Bahman, according to the

practice of the Magians, married his sister *Khumdni* (*Humay*),

who bore him a posthumous son named Dara.

Her brother Sasan, who had looked forward to inheriting the crown, was so overcome with disappointment

at seeing his sister made Queen Regent that he retired to the mountains amongst the Kurds and

became a shepherd.<sup>4</sup> From him, as the Persians believe,

descend the Sasanian kings, who are uniformly regarded as the legitimate successors of the

Kayanis, and the restorers of their glory. Their founder, *Ardashlr Babakān* (*Artakhshatr* son of Papak), is represented

*Das Iranische Nationalepos* p. 9

*Ibid.* p. 11 and n. 2 *ad calc.*

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* p. 12 and n. 3 *ad calc.*

<sup>4</sup> *Dinawari* p. 9

as the great-great-great-grandson of Sásán the son of Bahman the son of Zoroaster's patron Gushtásp. By thus representing their pedigree, the Sásánians strove to establish their position as the legitimate rulers of Persia, and "defenders of the faith" of Zoroaster a character which, with few exceptions, they strenuously exerted themselves to maintain.

We have seen that the Parthians (*Ashkúniyán*, *Muliku't-Tawd'if*) occupy hardly any place in the Epic, and it might

The Alexander legend

therefore be supposed that we should find therein an almost direct transition from the second Dárá (son of him mentioned above) to the Sásánians.

At this point, however, an entirely foreign element is introduced, namely, the Alexander-romance, which, reposing ultimately on the lost Greek text of the Pseudo-Callisthenes, is preserved in Syriac, Egyptian, Abyssinian<sup>1</sup> and Arabic, as well as Modern Persian, versions. The fate of Alexander in

Alexander in the Zoroastrian tradition

Persian legend is curious. In the genuine Zoroastrian tradition (as, for example, in the Pahlawí *Arda Viráf Námak*),<sup>2</sup> he appears as "the accursed

Alexander the Roman," who, urged on by the evil spirit, brought havoc, destruction, and slaughter into Persia, burned Persepolis and the Zoroastrian Scriptures (which, written with

Alexander in the Sháhname

gold ink on 12,000<sup>3</sup> prepared ox-skins, were stored up in the Archives at Stákhra Pápakán), and finally "self-destroyed fled to hell." Later,

the picturesque contents of the romance of the Pseudo-Callisthenes, and a desire to salve the national vanity comparable to that which tempted the authors of former English histories to treat William the Conqueror as an English king, led the Persians, including Firdawsí, to incorporate Alexander in the roll of their own monarchs, a feat which they achieved

<sup>1</sup> See Budge's *Book of Alexander*

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Haug and West, pp. 4 and 141

<sup>3</sup> Mas'udi's *Kitabu't-Tanbih*, p. 91

as follows (The first Dara demanded in marriage the daughter of Philip of Macedon, but afterwards, being displeased with her, divorced her and sent her back to her father. On her return she gave birth to Alexander, who was in reality her son by Dara, though Philip, anxious to conceal the slight put upon his daughter by the Persian King, gave out that the boy was his own son by one of his wives. Hence Alexander, in wresting Persia from his younger half brother, the second Dara, did but seize that to which, as elder son of the late King, he was entitled, and is thus made to close the glorious period of the ancient Pishdadi and Kayani kings. In the third

version, represented by the *Sikandar nāma* of Alexander the Great *Nidhāmi* (twelfth century), he is identified with a mysterious personage called *Dhu'l-Qarnayn* ("The two horned") mentioned in the *Qur'an* as a contemporary of Moses (with whom some suppose him to be identical), and, instructed by his wise and God-fearing tutor Aristotle (*Aristū, Aristū-tālis*), represents the ideal monotheistic king, bent on the destruction of the false creed of the heathen Persians. It is important to bear in mind these different conceptions of Alexander, and also the fact that he does not really survive in the genuine national remembrance, but has been introduced, together with Darius, from a foreign source, while the national memory goes no further back than the Sasanians.

Concerning the Parthian period we must notice, besides its very scanty and unsympathetic treatment, the curious fact that Parthian period. whereas five centuries and a half actually elapsed between the death of Alexander and the establishment of the Sasanian dynasty, this period is habitually reduced by the Persian and Arab historians to 266 years. The falsity, as well as the reason, of this arbitrary and misleading chronology is understood and explained by the learned *Mas'udi* in his *Kutābu'l-ta'rikh wa'l-ishraf*<sup>2</sup> as follows. When Ardashir

See the excellent edition published by de Goeje in his *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* (vol. viii pp. 97-9 Leyden 1893)

Bábakán established the Sásánian dynasty in A D 226 that is, about 550 years after Alexander a prophecy was generally current in Persia that a thousand years after Zoroaster the faith founded by him and the Persian Empire would fall together. Now Zoroaster is placed 280 or 300 years before Alexander hence, of the thousand years about 850 has already elapsed. Ardashír, fearing, apparently, that the prophecy might work its own fulfilment (for obviously he cannot have had any great belief in it if he hoped to cheat it of its effect by such means), and wishing to give his dynasty a longer respite, deliberately excised some three centuries from this period, thus making it appear that only 566 years out of the thousand had elapsed, and that his house might therefore hope to continue some 434 years, which, in fact, it did, for Yazdigird III, the last Sásánian king, was murdered in A D. 651-2 This extraordinary falsification of history is described by Mas'údí as an "ecclesiastical and political secret" of the Persians, and the fact that it was possible shows how entirely the archives and the art of reading and writing were in the hands of the ministers of Church and State.

With the Sásánian period, as already remarked, the National Legend, though still freely adorned with romantic and fictitious incidents, enters on the domain of real history, and becomes steadily more historical as it proceeds. As the Sásánian period will be discussed in the next chapter, it is unnecessary to enlarge further upon it in this place, and we shall accordingly pass at once to the history and antiquity of the Epic.

The references in the *Avesta* to *Sháhnáma* heroes are sufficient to show that even at the time when the former work was composed the National Legend already existed in its essential outlines. This, however, is by no means the only proof of its antiquity, for Noldeke has shown the occurrence of epic features in the accounts of the ancient Persian kings given by Greek writers, notably Ctesias, who was court-physician to Artaxerxes Mnemon,

and professedly compiled his work from Persian written sources. These epic features are, moreover, recurrent, and are transferred from one king and even dynasty to another so that, for example, a strong resemblance exists between the circumstances surrounding the youth and early adventures of Cyrus the first Achæmenian in his struggle against the Medes, and Ardashir the first Sasânian in his war with the Parthians while the appearance of the Eagle, *Šmurgh* or *Huma* (in each case a mighty and royal bird) is the protector of Achæmenes, Zal and Ardashir, the similar rôle played by two members of the noble Qaren family in the rescue of Nudhar the Kayânian and Piruz the Saanian from Turanian foes and the parallels offered by the Darius-Zopyrus and the Piruz Akhshunwar episodes, are equally remarkable.

The story of Zariadres, brother of Hystaspes, and the Princess Odatis is preserved to us by Athenæus from the history of Alexander composed by his chamber-

Th ۱ tkâr 1  
Zarîrân.

lain Chîras of Mitylene, and the same episode forms the subject of the oldest Pahlawî romance,

the *Yatkâr i Zarîrân* (see p 108 *supra*), written about A D 500. This important little book, the oldest truly epic fragment in Persian speech, though treating only of one episode of the National Legend, assumes throughout a certain acquaintance with the whole epic cycle.

We have here says Noldeke unless we are wholly deceived the phenomenon which shows itself in connection with the epic history of divers other peoples the substance is generally known individual portions therefrom are artistically elaborated and out of such materials by adaptations omissions and remodellings a more or less coherent and comprehensive epic may arise. The essential features of the Legend of Zarîr reappear in the short Arabic version of Tabarî which entirely agrees in part almost word for word with the corresponding portion of the *Shâhnama* whence it must have been taken from the ancient general tradition which forms the basis of the great Epic.

The "remodellings" to which Noldeke alludes consist chiefly, as he points out, of modifications designed to facilitate the artistic combination and fusion of the different episodes in one epic, and the suppression, in the case of Firdawsí's and other later versions, of such features or phrases as might be offensive to Muhammadan readers.

Of the Sásánian portion of the Epic we still possess one Pahlawí element in the *Kár námak-ī-Aī takhshatr-ī-Pápakān*, now accessible, both in the original and in a German translation (see p 108 *supra*). A comparison of this with the corresponding portion of the *Sháhnáma* (such as will be made for a portion of this episode in the next chapter) cannot fail to raise greatly our opinion of Firdawsí's fidelity to the sources on which he drew, for the correspondence is continuous and remarkable. This *Kár námak* was probably composed about A.D. 600, and the reference of Agathias (A.D. 580) to written Persian chronicles of the Kings (βασιλικοὶ διφθέραι, περσικοὶ βίβλοι, βασιλικά ἀπομνημονεύματα) in his account of Sásán, Pápak, and Ardashír affords another proof that individual episodes at least existed in the Pahlawí literature of this period.

According to the introduction prefixed to Firdawsí's *Sháhnáma* (A.D. 1425-6) by order of Baysunghur, the grandson of Tímúr (Tamerlane), a complete and corrected Pahlawí text of the whole Epic from Gayúmarth to Khusraw Parwíz (i.e., to A.D. 627) was compiled by the *dihqán* Dánishwar in the reign of the last Sásánian king Yazdígud III; and Noldeke remarks on this that, whatever may be the worth of this account in itself, the agreement of the versions given by the Arab historians with the *Sháhnáma* down to the death of Khusraw Parwíz, and their wide divergence after that event, afford evidence of its truth in this particular point, while the strongly patriotic and legitimist tone which pervades it sufficiently prove that it was compiled under royal supervision and patronage.

Final Pahlawí  
recension of the  
Book of Kings

[This Pahlawī *Khudhā nāma*(k), constantly alluded to by Arab writers such as Hamza, the author of the *Fihrist*, &c , was translated into Arabic by Ibnu'l Muqaffa' in the middle of the eighth century of our era, and so became generally known in the world of Arabic literature. This version, most unfortunately, is lost, as is also the Persian prose version made in A D 957-8 by order of Abu Mansur al-Ma'murī for Abu Mansur b 'Abdu r Razzāq, at that time governor of Tus, by four Zoroastrians of Herat Sistan, Shapur, and Tus : The metrical Persian *Shāhnāma*, which was constructed chiefly from this, was begun for the Sāmānid Prince Nuh b Mansur (A D 976-997) by *Daqiqi*, who, however, had only completed some thousand couplets, dealing with the reign of Gushtasp and the advent of Zoroaster, when he was assassinated by a Turkish slave. It was reserved for Firdawsī to complete, a few years later, the task he had begun, and to display in some sixty thousand couplets (which include Daqiqi's work) the National Legend in its final and perfect form. To Daqiqi and Firdawsī we shall recur when speaking of Modern Persian literature, and nothing more need therefore be said about them in this chapter, save that the *Shāhnāma* represents the National Legend in its final epic form.

See al Biruni's *Chronology of Ancient Nations* Sachau's translation pp 119 and 45 Noldeke's *Dan Iranische Nationalepos* pp 14-15



BOOK II

*OF THE HISTORY OF PERSIA FROM THE RISE  
OF THE SASANIAN TO THE FALL OF THE  
UMAYYAD DYNASTY*

(A D 226–750)



## CHAPTER IV

### THE SASANIAN PERIOD (A D 229-652)

It would be neither suitable nor possible to attempt in this chapter to give a detailed history of the Sasanians, though on the other hand a period of such great interest and importance could not fittingly be omitted altogether. For this is a period which marks the transition from the old to the new, intimately connected with both, embodying still much of the ancient glory of the Achæmenians, yet standing in a far clearer historical light—a light to which, besides contemporary inscriptions, coins, and seals, and the native records preserved by Arabic and Persian historians and romance writers, Byzantine, Syriac, Armenian, and Jewish records each add their contribution. It was these kings, called by the Greeks *Chosroes* and by the Arabs *Āṣūd* (pl *Āḥṣira*), who were the restorers of the ancient Persian Empire and the “Good Religion” of Zoroaster, and of whom Mīr‘ūdī (writing in A D 956) thus speaks in the preface to his *Āṣūd bu t tanblh wa l uhrdī* (p 6) {“And we have restricted ourselves in this our book to the mention of these empires because of the mighty dominion of the kings of Persia, the antiquity of their rule, the continuity of their sovereignty, the excellence of their administration, their well-ordered policy, the prosperity of their domains, their care for their subjects, and the subjugation to their allegiance of many of the kings of the world

who brought unto them taxes and tribute. And they held sway, withal, over the fourth Clime, which is the Clime of Babel, the middle part of the earth, and the noblest of the [seven] Climes ” In the same spirit sings a poet cited in the same work (p 37), who, though he wrote in Arabic, boasted descent from the Royal House of Persia

“And we portioned out our empire in our time  
As you portion out the meat upon a plate  
Greece and Syria we gave to knightly Salm,  
To the lands wherein the sunset lingers late  
And to Tý the Turkish marches were assigned,  
Where our cousin still doth rule in royal state  
And to Irán we subdued the land of Párs,  
Whence we still inherit blessings rare and great”

We have seen that the Sásánian kings called themselves “gods” or “divine beings” (Pahlawí *bagh*, Chaldæan *aláhâ*, Greek *θεός*), regarded themselves as the descendants and legitimate successors of the ancient legendary Kayání dynasty and the inheritors of the *Farri-Kayání* or “Royal Splendour” a kind of Shckina or symbolised Divine Right by virtue of which they alone could rightly wear the Persian crown and did everything in their power to impress their subjects with a sense of their supreme majesty Of the accession of “the Royal Splendour” to the House of Sásán we shall shortly cite a curious legend, and of the majesty maintained by them the following extract from Ibn Hishám’s *Biography of the Prophet* (ed. Wustenfeld, p 42) furnishes an instance

“Now Kísrá [Chosroes, here Khusraw Anúshírwán] used to sit in his audience-hall where was his crown, like unto a mighty cask, according to what they say, set with rubies, emeralds, and pearls, with gold and silver, suspended by a chain of gold from the top of an arch in this his audience-hall, and his neck could not support the crown, but he was veiled by draperies till he had taken his seat in this his audience-hall, and had introduced his head within his crown, and had settled himself

The Sásánian  
kings regarded  
as divine beings

The splendour  
which they  
maintained

in his place whereupon the draperies were withdrawn And no one who had not previously seen him looked upon him without kneeling in reverence before him

In no country, probably, has the doctrine of the Divine Right of kings been more generally and more strongly held than it was in Persia in Sasanian times That The doctrine of the Divine Right in Persia. any one not belonging to the Royal House should dare to assume the royal title was, as Noldeke has pointed out<sup>1</sup> in reference to the rebellious noble Bahram Chubin and the usurper Shahrbaraz, regarded as an almost incredible act of wickedness and presumption The prevailing sentiment of the people is, no doubt, truly reflected in the following anecdote told by Dinawari (p 98) of the flight of Bahram Chubin after his defeat by Khusraw Parwiz and his Byzantine allies—

And Bahram fled headlong and on his way he passed by a hamlet where he halted and he and Mardān Shīr and Yazdan Gushnasp alighted at the dwelling of an old woman A anecdote of Bahram Chubin. Then they produced some food which they had with them and supped and gave what was left over to the old woman Then they produced wine and Bahram said to the old woman Hast thou nothing wherewith we can drink? I have a little gourd replied she and she brought it to them and they cut off the top and began to drink from it Then they produced dessert and they said to the old woman Hast thou nothing wherein we can put the dessert? So she brought them a winnowing shovel into which they poured the dessert So Bahram ordered that wine should be given to the old woman and then he said to her What news hast thou old lady? The news with us answered she is that Kisra hath advanced with an army of Greeks and fought Bahram and overcome him and recovered from him his kingdom And what sayst thou asked Bahram concerning Bahram? A silly fool replied she who claims the kingdom not being a member of the Royal House Said Bahram Therefore it is that he drinks out of gourds and eats his dessert out of winnowing fans And this became a saying amongst the Persians which they are wont to cite as a proverb

For myself, I believe that Gobineau is right in asserting that this doctrine of the Divine Right of the House of Sāsān had an immense influence on all subsequent Persian history, more especially on the tenacity with which the Persians have clung to the doctrine of the Shī'a or sect of 'Alī. To them the idea of electing a Caliph, or spiritual successor to the Prophet, natural enough to the democratic Arabs, could not appear otherwise than revolting and unnatural, and in the case of 'Umar, the second orthodox Caliph, there was also an element of personal hatred against the destroyer of the Persian Empire, which, though disguised under a religious garb, is nevertheless unmistakable. Husayn, on the other hand, the younger son of the Prophet's daughter Fátima, and of his cousin 'Alī, was believed by them to have married Shahr-bínú, the daughter of Yazdigird III, the last Sāsānian king; and hence the remaining Imāms of both great Shī'ite factions (the "Sect of the Twelve" now prevalent in Persia, and the "Sect of the Seven," or Isma'ílís) represent not only the Prophetic but the Kingly right and virtue, being at the same time descended from the Prophet Muhammad and from the House of Sāsān. Hence the political doctrine to which Gobineau (*Rel et philos. dans l'Asie Centrale*, p. 275) alludes in the following passage

"C'est un point de doctrine politique incontesté en Perse que les Alides seuls ont le droit à porter légitimement la couronne, et cela en leur double qualité d'héritiers des Sassanides, par leur mère, Bibi-Sheher-banou, fille du dernier roi Yazdedjerd, et d'Imams, chefs de la religion vraie. Tous les princes non Alides sont des souverains de fait, aux yeux des gens sévères, ce sont même des tyrans, dans aucun cas, personne ne les considère comme détenteurs de l'empire à titre régulier. Je ne m'étendrai pas ici sur cette opinion absolue, tranchante, qui n'a jamais admis la prescription, j'en ai assez longuement parlé dans un autre ouvrage. Ce fut sur cette base que les politiques bâbys élevèrent tout leur édifice."

Now whether this marriage really took place or not, it has been accepted by the Shi'ites as a historical fact for many centuries. Amongst early authors who allude to it we may cite al Ya'qubī (ed. Houtma, vol. II, p. 293), an Arabic historian who flourished in the latter part of the ninth century of our era, and who concludes his account of Husayn's tragic death as follows —

Amongst the sons of al Husayn were Alī Akbar who was killed in at Taff and left no offspring whose mother was Layla the daughter of Abu Murrah, Urwah Mas'ud ath Thaqafī and Alī Asghar whose mother was Harar the daughter of Yazdigird whom al Husayn used to call Ghazala (the Gazelle).

This Shahr banu, "the Mother of Nine Imams" (the fourth to the twelfth) still holds a place in the hearts of her countrymen — she gives her name to a mountain three or four miles south of Tīhran (the *Kuh-i Bibi Shahr banū*) which no male footstep may profane, and which is visited by women who desire an intercessor with God for the fulfilment of their needs — and she is one of the heroines of those heart-moving passion plays (*ta'ziyas*) which are yearly enacted in every Persian town and colony to crowds of weeping spectators. And this is how she is made to speak in the drama entitled "the Passing of Shahrbanu" (*Ta'ziya-i ghā'ib shudan-i Shahr banu*, Tīhran, A.H. 1314, p. 19) —

*Zī nasl-i Yazdigird-i-Shahrīyaram  
Zī Nushurvan buvad asl-i nizāram  
Dar an waqt ki bakhtam kāmran bud  
Badān shahr-i Ray am andar makan bud  
Shab-i raftam bi suyi qasr-i bābam  
Bijamad Ha rat-i Zahra bi khwabam  
Bu guft Ay Shahr banu bā sad a'in  
Tura man bar Husayn āram bi kabīn*

That portion of Arabia which borders on the cultivated lands of Iraq. Other names ascribed by other writers are besides *Shahr bānu* (universal amongst the modern Persians) *as-Sulḍfa* and *Shah-i Zan īn*.

*Bī-guftam, 'Man nshasta dar Madd'īn,  
 Husayn andar Madīna hast sākīn  
 'Muhāl-ast īn sukhun ' Fārmīd Zahā,  
 'Hasan āyad bī-sardārī dar īnjā,  
 'Tū mī-gaīdī asī, ay bī-qarīna,  
 'Barand-at az Madd'īn dar Madīna;  
 'Bī-farzandam Husayn paywand sāzi,  
 'Marā az nasl-i-khud khursand sāzi  
 'Zī nasl-at nuh Imām āyad bī-darwān  
 'Kī na-b'wad mīslashān dar dār-i-darwān.'*

"Born of the race of Yazdīgird the King  
 From Nūshirwan my origin I trace  
 What time kind Fortune naught but joy did bring  
 In Ray's proud city was my home and place  
 There in my father's palace once at night  
 In sleep to me came Fātima 'the Bright';  
 'O Shahr-bānū!—thus the vision cried—  
 'I give thee to Husayn to be his bride!'  
 Said I, 'Behold Madd'īn is my home,  
 And how shall I to far Madīna roam?'  
 Impossible! But Fātima cried, 'Nay,  
 Hasan shall hither come in war's array,  
 And bear thee hence, a prisoner of war,  
 From this Madd'īn to Madīna far,  
 Where, joined in wedlock with Husayn, my boy,  
 Thou shalt bear children who will be my joy  
 For nine Imāms to thee shall owe their birth,  
 The like of whom hath not been seen on earth!'"

A few lines further on occurs a passage so characteristic of

\* *Madīna* in Arabia means "the city," and *Madd'īn* is its plural. The ancient Yathrib, when honoured by the flight thither of the Prophet Muhammad, was called *Madinatu'n-Nabī*, "the City of the Prophet," or simply *al-Madīna*, "the City." By *Mada'īn* Ctesiphon, the ancient Sasanian capital in Chaldæa, is meant. It is said by the Arabian geographers to have been so called because it was formed by the fusion and coalescence of seven cities (*mada'īn*). See Barbier de Meynard's *Dict de la Perse*, p. 519. The confusion between Ray (the ancient Rhagae, near the modern Tihiran) and Ctesiphon is merely one indication of the essentially popular and unscientific character of these *ta'ziyas*, which makes their testimony to the national feeling the more significant. The sentiments embodied by them are not those of pedants, but of the nation.

the Persian hatred of 'Umar and love of 'Alī that I cannot forbear quoting it in this connection Shahr banu is brought to Madina in a litter, as befits a king's daughter, by the chivalrous Hasan, but then her troubles begin —

*Wall chun shud Madina man il : mē  
 Gham : dlam fu un shud bar dīl : mē  
 Yaki guftā kī īn dukhtar kanī ast  
 Yaki guftā Bī shahr : khud a ī ast  
 Bī masjid mard u zan dar bām mah ar  
 Marā na dī Umar burdand mādār !  
 Kalāmi guft ka u dar khurush am  
 Bu guft īn bī kasān rā mī furusham !  
 'Alī jiddat chu bar āmad khurushān  
 Bu guftā Lab bī band ay dūn : nādān  
 Na shāyad burdan ay mal un : ghaddār  
 Buzurgān ra sar : urdān bī bā ar !  
 Pas a ān khwarī ay nur : dū ayn-am  
 Bī bakhshidand bar bābat Husayn am  
 Husayn karda aşīyyat bar man : ār  
 Na mānam dar miyān : Āl : Āl hār  
 Agar mānam asir u khu ir gardam  
 Bīrahna sar bī har bā ār gardam  
 Tu, chun hastī Imām u Shahrīyāram  
 Bī dast : tust madar ikhtiyāram  
 Agar gu : rauam dard at bī junam  
 Šalāh am gar na mī danī bī mānam !*

But when at last I reached Madina's town  
 A whole world's sorrow seemed to weigh me down  
 One cried This girl a serving maid shall be !  
 Another Nay she was of high degree !  
 The women thronged the roofs the mosque the men  
 O Mother ! Me they bore to Umar then  
 Who spoke a word that caused me pain untold  
 These hapless wretches shall as slaves be sold !  
 But Alī then appeared upon the scene  
 And cried Be silent fool and coward mean !  
 These gentle women traitor void of grace  
 Shall not stand naked in the market place !  
 Light of mine eyes ! After such treatment dire  
 They gave me to Husayn thy noble sire

Who did advise poor me, to spare me pain,  
 That after him I should not here remain  
 Should I remain, enslaved, in fashion base,  
 I should be driven through each market-place  
 Now, Mother, dear, Imám and Sov'reign mine,  
 Into thy hands my option I resign  
 Bid my fare forth, my bosom filled with pain,  
 Or bid me tarry, and I will remain !”

A darker picture of the Sásánians is presented by Christian, notably by Syriac, writers, a source of information “not sufficiently used,” as Noldeke remarks, “by most

Views of Christian subjects and contemporaries of the Sasanians

Orientalists” Two works of this class in particular may be recommended to those students of

Persian history who, like the writer, are unfortunately unable to consult this literature in the original. The first is the *Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite*,<sup>1</sup> composed in A D 507, describing the Persian invasion of Asia Minor by Kawád, and especially the sufferings of Edessa and Âmid (now ‘Urfá and Diyár Bekr) in the beginning of the sixth century of our era The other is the *Acts of the Persian*

The Persian martyrs

*Martyrs*,<sup>2</sup> excerpted from various Syriac manuscripts and translated into German with the most scholarly notes, by George Hoffmann In these books, both

on political and religious grounds, it is natural that the Persians should be depicted in rather lurid colours, but in the first, at any rate, it does not appear that they acted more cruelly or more falsely than their Christian antagonists, though it is natural enough that the author, writing within two or three years of the war which had desolated his home, should occasionally speak of them in such terms as these “Now the pleasure of this wicked people is abundantly made evident by this, that they have not shown mercy unto those who were

<sup>1</sup> Text and translation published at Cambridge (1882) by the late Dr W Wright

<sup>2</sup> *Auszüge aus Syrischen Akten Persischer Märtyrer . . . von Georg Hoffmann* (Leipzig, 1880)

delivered up unto them, for they have been accustomed to show their pleasure and to rejoice in evil done to the children of men

Religious feeling, indeed, ran high on both sides, and in the matter of toleration there was little to choose between the Zoroastrian and the Christian priesthoods. A good instance of the extent to which judgment of character was influenced by purely theological considerations is afforded by comparing the accounts of Yazdigird I (A D 399-420) given by the Arabic historians (who drew their information and their views ultimately from the Pahlawi *Book of Kings*, which was composed under the influence of the Magian priests) with a Syriac account of the same king's character from the pen of a contemporary Christian writer. In the former Yazdigird is called "the sinner" (Pers *Baza gar*, Arab *al Athim*), and his wickedness, frowardness, and tyranny are described as almost superhuman. In the latter he is spoken of in the following terms: "the good and merciful King Yazdigird, the Christian, the blessed amongst the kings, may he be remembered with blessing, and may his future be yet more fair than his earlier life! Every day he doeth good to the poor and the distressed." So too Khusraw I (A D 531-578) gained the title of Nushirwan (*Anushak rubân*, "of immortal soul"), by which he is still remembered as the very embodiment of kingly virtue and justice, by his high handed suppression of the heresy of the communist Mazdak, which, in the eyes of the intolerant Magian priests, constituted his chief claim to "immortality" and such service has their approval done him that Sa'di, zealous Muhammadan as he was, says —

*Zinda st nam : farrukh : Nushirwân bi adl  
Garchi basî guzashî kî Nushirwân na mând*

"The blessed name of Núshírwán doth still for justice stand,  
Though long hath passed since Núshírwán hath vanished from  
the land."

For the Christians, too, Núshírwán, as we learn from Dínawarí (p. 72), entertained the greatest contempt. When his son Anúsha-zádh, who had espoused the faith of his Christian mother, revolted against him, and his viceroy at Ctesiphon wrote to him for instructions, he wrote in his reply as follows : " Let not the multitude of the people affright thee, for they have no enduring might. How, indeed, shall the Christians endure, when it is prescribed in their religion that if one of them be smitten on the left cheek, he shall offer the right also ? "

To return now to the scope of this chapter. Being unable to do more than glance at certain points in the history of this period, I propose to speak especially of its beginning and its end ; the first, which is largely mixed with legend and fable, in order that I may have an opportunity of comparing certain episodes therein as sung by Firdawsí in the *Sháhnáma* with the same episodes as narrated in the Pahlawí *Ká-i-námal-i-Artakshatr-i-Pápakán* ; the last, as having an immediate connection with the Arab Conquest which marks the inauguration of the modern, or Muhammadan period. Besides this, two religious movements of this epoch those associated with the names of Manes (Mání) and Mazdak deserve some notice, as early instances of that passion for philosophical speculation which is so remarkable a characteristic of the Persians, who have probably produced more great heresiarchs than any other nation in the world. Of these two men the first was born, according to his own statement,<sup>1</sup> during the reign of Ardawán (Artabanus) the last Parthian king, and was contemporary with the founder of the

<sup>1</sup> See al-Bírúní's *Chronology of Ancient Nations*, translated by Sachau (London, 1879), p. 121

Sasanian dynasty, the second, as we have seen, was put to death by Nushirwán in A D 528 or 529, at which time the Sasanian power was at its height, though the first symptoms of its decline were not far distant. This chapter will therefore fall into four divisions—namely, (1) The Legend of Ardashir and the foundation of the Sasanian dynasty, (2) Manes and the Manichæan doctrine, (3) Nushirwán and Mazdak, (4) the last days of the House of Sasan.

### I The Legend of Ardashir

The principal episodes of this Legend, as presented by the Pahlawí *Kárndmak* (of which I make use of Noldeke's excellent German translation, a *tirage à part* of 21-69 pages, whereof the Introduction occupies pp 22-34) and the *Sháhndáma* (Macan's Calcutta ed., vol iii, pp 1365-1416) are as follows

(1) Sasan fifth in descent from Bahman ' *Dirá dast* (Longi manus see p 117 *supra*) enters the service of Papak (Babak) Prince of Pars as a herdsman. Papak warned in a dream of Sasan's kingly origin raises him to high honour and confers on him the hand of his daughter. Of this union Ardashir is the offspring (K 36-38 Sh 1365)

(2) Papak adopts Ardashir as his son and as he grows up the fame of his courage, wisdom and knightly virtues reaches Ardawan the last Parthian King who summons him to his court at Ray. There he is honourably entertained until one day out hunting he gives the lie to one of Ardawan's sons who claims a remarkable shot made in reality by him. Thereupon he is disgraced and dismissed to serve in the Royal stables (K 38-41 Sh 1366)

(3) A beautiful and wise maiden who enjoys Ardawan's fullest confidence takes pity upon Ardashir, provides two swift horses and escapes with him to Pars. Ardawan pursues them but turns back on learning that the Royal Splendour personified as a fine ram has caught up Ardashir and rides behind him on his horse (K 41-46 Sh 1370)

(4) Ardashir's wars with the Parthians and others, his defeat of Ardawan and his son and his reverse at the hands of the Kurds (K 46-49 Sh 1374)

(5) The episode of Haftan bokht (Haftawad) and the monstrous



worm of Kirmán, including the war with Mithrak (Mihrak) (K. 49-57, Sh 1381)

(6) How Ardawán's daughter, married to Ardashír, is by him doomed to death, how her life is saved by the chief *múbad* (named Abarsám by Tabarí) how she brings forth a son, who is named Shápúr (*Sháh-puhar*, "King's son"), and how the boy is recognised by his father (K 57-63, Sh 1392).

(7) Ardashír, having learned from the King of India, Kayt or Kayd, that the sovereignty of Persia will be in his family or in that of his enemy Mihrak, endeavours to extirpate the latter. One of Mihrak's daughters is saved from the massacre, and brought up amongst peasants. Shápúr sees and falls in love with her, but conceals his marriage, and the birth of his son Hurmuzd in which it results, from his father Ardashír. Hurmuzd, when seven years old, is recognised by his grandfather by his boldness on the polo field (K 64-68, Sh 1397).

No one who has read the *Kār-nāmak* and this portion of the *Shāhnāma* side by side can fail to be greatly impressed by the general fidelity, even in minute details, with which the latter reproduces the former, and our opinion of Firdawsī's faithful adherence to genuine old legends is equally strengthened by a comparison of the Pahlawí legend of Zarír (*Yātkār-i-Zarírān*, translated into German by Geiger)<sup>\*</sup> with the corresponding part of the *Shāhnāma*. Now it is a mere accident that we happen to be able to check these portions by the originals, and we may fairly assume that elsewhere, where we have no such means of control, the poet is equally conscientious in his adherence, even in detail, to ancient legend. Space, however, will not allow the comparison in this place of more than one or two incidents of these two versions of the Legend of Ardashír. We will begin with the account of his birth.

<sup>\*</sup> See the *Sitzungsberichte d K b Akademie d. Wiss zu München* for 1890, vol 1, pp 43-84 *Das Yātkār-i Zarírān und sein Verhältniss zum Shāh-nāma* by Geiger, and Noldeke's *Perisische Studien*, II *Das Buch von Zarēr*, in the *Sitzungsberichte d phil hist Classe der K Akad d Wissenschaften* for 1892 (Vienna), vol. cxxvi, Abhandlung 12.

*Kármamak* v

After the death of Alexander the Roman there were in Iran 240 tribal princes Ispahan Pars and the neighbouring lands were in the hands of the chief of them Ardawan Papak was Warden of the Marches and Prince of Pars and Governor for Ardawan Papak dwelt in Stakhr he had no son who might be able preserve his name Sasan was a herdsman of Papak and abode ever with the flocks but he was of the race of Dara the son of Dara During the evil reign of Alexander he had fled away and gone forth with Kurdish shepherds Papak knew not that Sasan was of the race of Dara the son of Dara Now one night Papak dreamed that the Sun from the head of Sasan illuminated the whole world Next night he saw Sasan riding on a richly caparisoned white elephant while all throughout the whole *Kishkar* (region clime) surrounded him tendered him their homage and invoked on him praises and blessings On the third night he saw how the (sacred) Fires Frobá Gushasp and Mithr waxed great in the house of Sasan and gave light to the whole world This amazed him and so he summoned before him the wise men and interpreters of dreams and related to them what he had dreamed on all three nights Then said the interpreters of dreams Either the man himself concerning whom thou hast dreamed this or one of his children will attain to the lordship of the world for the sun and the richly caparisoned white elephant signify Strength Might and Victory while the Fire Frobá signifies men well instructed in religion and eminent over their peers the Fire Gushasp warriors and captains of hosts and the Fire Burjūn Mithr the peasants and husbandmen of the whole world So the lordship will accrue to this man or to his children When Papak heard this speech he dismissed every one summoned Sasan before him and asked him Of what family and stock art thou? Was any one of thy fathers or forbears a ruler or sovereign? Then Sasan prayed Papak for indulgence and safety [with the words] Inflict not on me hurt or harm Papak agreed to this and there upon Sasan revealed to him his secret and who he was Then Papak was glad and said I will promote thee whereupon at his bidding a full royal dress was brought to him and given to Sasan [and he bade him] Put it on Sasan did so and at Papak's command he then strengthened himself for some days with good and proper meals Later he gave him his daughter in marriage and when the time (according to the predestination of fate) was in accord the girl forthwith conceived and from her Artakhshir was born

*Shāhnāma* (ed Macan, vol. III, pp. 1365-1367).

"When on the wæl-stow Dárá his doom met  
From all his House her face Fortune averted.  
Him did a son survive, worthy of worship,  
Wary and wise in war, Sásán ycleped,  
Who, when he saw his sire thus foully smitten,  
Saw, too, on Persia's arms Fortune look frowning,  
Fled from his foes of Greece, swift and fleet-footed,  
Stayed not to stumble on snares of ill fortune  
In distant lands of Ind death overtook him,  
Where he in turn a son left to succeed him.

Thus in like wise for four generations  
From sire to son the name Sásán descended.  
Herdsman were these and hinds, tenders of cattle,  
Laden each year long with heavy burdens

When now the last in birth came unto Bábak,  
And on the grazing-grounds sought the head-herdsman,  
'Hast thou,' he questioned him, 'need for an hireling,  
Who here is fain to dwell, even in hardship?'  
Him the head-herdsman hired to his service,  
Holding him night and day unto long labour.  
So for a while the man thus did continue,  
Heart-sick and woe-worn, wearied with toiling.

Sunk in deep slumber Bábak one night slept,  
And his bright spirit thus in his dream saw.  
On a fierce elephant Sasán was seated,  
Held in his hand a sharp sword-blade of India,  
While those who ringed him round in adoration  
Bowed down, and on him blessings invoked  
He by right rule and wise made the earth prosper,  
And from the saddened soul banished the sorrow

When on the second night Bábak to sleep sank,  
Care of his anxious mind was the companion  
Thus in his dream he saw now, that the Fire-Priest  
Held in his hand aloft three flaming censers,  
Kharrád and Mihr-fires, Ádhar-Gushasp too,\*

\* On these three most sacred Fires, see Noldeke's note in his translation of the *Kār-namak* (p 37, n 3 *ad calc.*) *Kharrád* in Firdawsí stands for *Frobá*, *Frôbag*, or *Farnbag*

Brilliantly blazing like the bright heavens  
 There before Sāsān fiercely were flaring  
 While in each blazing fire aloe wood smouldered

Then from his slumber Babak awaking  
 Felt in his anxious heart fearful forebodings  
 Such as were wise to read dreamings and visions  
 Such as were skilled in solving of riddles  
 Straightway assembled at Bābak's palace  
 Seers and Sāga men skilful in learning  
 Then unto these revealed Babak his vision  
 And all his dreamings frankly unfolded  
 While the dream readers pondering deeply  
 Lent all their ears while forming their answer

Answered the spokesman then king highly favoured  
 Look we now closely to the dream's showing  
 He whom thou sawest thus in thy slumber  
 High o'er the sun shall lift his head in lordship  
 Even though he should fail in the fulfilment  
 Him will a son succeed earth to inherit.  
 Blithely did Babak lend ear to this answer  
 Unto each gifts he gave after his measure

Then Bābak straightway haled the head herdsman  
 Forth from the flocks he came through the thick fog drifts  
 Breasting the sleet and snow wrapped in his blanket  
 Fear in his bosom frost on his fur cloak  
 When from his audience hall Babak had ousted  
 Strangers alike both statesman and servant  
 Then by his side the shepherd he seated  
 Graciously greeted him asked him of Sasan  
 Asked of his lineage and of his fore bears  
 While with foreboding filled Sasan sat silent

Then at length spake he Sire to thy shepherd  
 If thou wilt freely grant grace and forgiveness  
 All that concerns my race I will discover  
 If hand in hand with oath thou wilt assure me

Noldeke (*loc cit* p. 6) notices this especially as one of the graphic touches whereby Firdawsi strove to give life and colour to the curt dry narrative of the Pahlawī original

Concerning the hand-contract see the *Vendīdād* Fargard iv v 2 Darmesteter's English transl. in *S B E* vol i p. 35)

That neither privily nor yet in public  
 Thou wilt attempt to wreak on me thy vengeance'  
 Bábak, thus hearing, loosened his tongue in speech:  
 Much made he mention of the All-Giver,  
 Saying, 'I swear no hurt shall befall thee,  
 Nay, I will hold thee honoured and noble'

Then spake the youth again freely to Bábak,  
 'Know, valiant knight, that Sásán my sire is,  
 Who from King Ardashír's seed was descended,  
 (He who is called by you 'Bahman the Long-hand'),  
 Of brave Isfandiyár he was the offspring,  
 Who of King Gushtásp's fair fame was the guardian';  
 When Bábak heard this, tear-floods he rained  
 From those clear eyes which gazed on the vision  
 Then kingly garments brought he from out his store,  
 And eke a horse equipped with lordly harness  
 'Hence to the bath,' quoth he, 'hie thee in all haste,  
 And there abide till fit raiment be brought thee.'

Soon a fair palace built he for Sásán;  
 (Thus from the herdsman did he upraise him),  
 And in this palace when he had placed him  
 Bondsmen and servants set he before him,  
 Gave him all gear and garb needful for lordship,  
 And of all goods and gifts ample endowment,  
 Last, his dear daughter gave him in wedlock,  
 Crown of his glory she, and his heart's darling.

When o'er the moon-faced maid nine moons had waned  
 To her a son was born, radiant as sun-light,  
 Like unto Ardashír, famed in the older time,  
 Graceful, and growing daily in favour.  
 Him too his father Ardashír named,  
 By him his grand-sire greatly was gladdened"

\* The tracing of the Sásánian pedigree to Gushtásp (Vishtáspa), the protector of Zoroaster, and the first "Defender of the Faith" is part of the general plan which aims at representing them as the direct and legitimate heirs of the ancient Persian kings, and the hereditary champions of "the Good Religion"

The next episode which I shall give is the flight of Ardashīr from Ardawān's court at Ray to Pars, accompanied by the beautiful and wise maiden (called *Gulnār* by Firdawsī) who had hitherto acted as Ardawān's counsellor and adviser, but who is moved by love for Ardashīr to cast in her lot with him

// *Kārmāmak*

Thereupon Ardawān equipped an army of 4 000 men and took the road towards Pars after Artakhshīr. When it was mid day he came to a place by which the road to Pārs passed and asked 'At what time did those two riders whose faces were set in this direction pass by here?' Then said the people 'Early in the morning when the sun rose they passed by swiftly as the wind Artai and a very large ram ran after them than which a finer could not be found. We know that already ere now he will have put behind him a distance of many parasangs and that it will be impossible for you to catch him. So Ardawan tarried not there but hastened on. When he came to another place he asked the people 'When did those two riders pass by?' They answered 'To-day at noon did they go by like the wind Artai and a ram ran after them. Then Ardawan was astonished and said 'Consider the two riders we know but what can that ram be?' Then he asked the Dastur who replied 'That is the kingly Splendour (*Khurra : Khud'd ih*) it hath not yet overtaken him but we must make haste it is possible that we may catch them before it overtakes them. Then Ardawan hastened on with his horsemen. On the second day they had put behind them seventy parasangs then a caravan met them. Ardawan asked the people 'In what place did you meet those two riders?' They replied 'Between you and them is still a distance of twenty parasangs. We noticed that beside one of those riders a very large and mighty ram sat on the horse. Ardawan asked the Dastur 'What signifies this ram which is beside him on the horse?' He answered 'May'st thou live for ever! The Royal Splendour (*Khurra : Kayān = Firdawsī's farr : kayānī* and the *Kauaem Huareno* of the Avesta) hath overtaken Ardashīr in no wise can we now take them captive. Therefore weary not yourself and your horsemen more nor further tire the horses lest they succumb. Seek in some other way to prevail against Artakhshīr. When Ardawan heard this he turned back and betook himself again to his home

*Shāhnamā.*

"Then did the King perceive plain that the maiden  
 With Ardashir had fled, his favours scorning  
 Thereat his heart was stirred into dire anger,  
 And, on his chestnut horse hastily mounting,  
 Called he his horsemen bold out on the war-trail,  
 And on the southward road forth like a fire flamed

On the road came he to a fair township,  
 Wherein were many men and countless cattle  
 Of them demanded he whether at day-break  
 Any had heard the beat of horses' hoof-strokes,  
 Or had beheld a pair riding right hotly,  
 One on a snow-white steed, one on a black barb  
 Answered one, 'Yea, hard by on the road here,  
 Forth to the plain fared two with their horses,  
 And at the horses' heels galloped a wild sheep,  
 Which, like the horses, hurled dust-clouds behind it.'

Then quoth King Ardawān to his adviser,  
 'What was this mountain-sheep which ran behind them?'  
 Answered the other, 'That Royal Splendour  
 Which, by his lucky star, leads him to lordship  
 If now this sheep should o'ertake him in running  
 Naught there is left us saving long labour.'

There then King Ardawān hastily halted,  
 Rested, refreshed him, then hastened onward  
 After Prince Ardashir hotly they hurried,  
 At their head Ardawān with his adviser.

*(Fifteen couplets, ll 10-24, omitted)*

When of the day had passed half, and the world-light  
 Up to the midmost point heaven had measured,  
 Saw he again a fair hamlet and fragrant,  
 Where, too, the village-folk hastened to meet him  
 Thus quoth the King once more unto their head-man,  
 'Tell me, these riders, how passed they your hamlet?'  
 Thus quoth the head-man 'Lord of fair fortune,  
 Born 'neath a lucky star, cunning in counsel!  
 What time the sun in high heaven was paling,  
 And night was spreading her purple vestment,

Hard by our hamlet two riders hastened  
 Dry were their lips with thirst their raiment dust stained  
 And behind one on the saddle a sheep sat  
 In palace hunting scenes neer was its like met

Then to King Ardawan spake his adviser  
 Turn we now back again whither we came from  
 Since now the matter changeth its aspect  
 In that King Ardashir's luck rides behind him  
 So with hands empty will the quest leave us  
 Unto thy son now send thou a letter  
 Unto him point by point make clear the matter  
 That he perchance may gain trace of our quarry  
 Ere of the mountain sheep's milk he partaketh

When Ardawan had heard thus from the spokesman  
 He for a surety knew his fortune faded  
 So in the hamlet straight he alighted  
 And rendered praises to the All Giver  
 But when the night was spent at early morning  
 Bade he his armed host turn themselves homewards  
 So with cheeks fallow like the scorched reed bed  
 Did he to Ray return in the dark twilight

The Legend of Haftán bokht (Haftawad in the *Shah nama*) and the Worm of Kirmán is too interesting to be entirely omitted, though lack of space compels me to give only that portion of it which relates to the actual destruction of this monster. The connection of this Worm (*Kirm*) with the city of Kirmán is, of course, a piece of popular etymology, but it serves to show that those who persist in writing the name of this town as *Karman* adopt a pronunciation which has certainly not been used in Persia for nine hundred years, whatever may have been the case in more ancient times. A similar word play occurs in the *Bustán* of Sa'di (ed Graf, p 87, l 535). On the name *Haftan bokht*, "the Seven have delivered," Noldeke has a very interesting note (*Kar námak*, p 49 n 4). He points out that many names, notably of Christians, were compounded with the word *bokht*, "hath delivered," e.g., *Marâ bokht*, "the Lord hath delivered," *Yishu'*

*bókh*t, or *Bókht-yishit*, "Jesus hath delivered," while amongst Zoroastrians we find *Si-bókht*, "the Three (i.e., good thoughts, good words, and good deeds) have delivered," and *Chahár-bókht*, "the Four have delivered" "The Seven" referred to in the name of Ardashír's opponent are, he adds, the seven planets, which belong to the Creation of Ahriman the Evil Spirit This name is therefore peculiarly appropriate for one whose reliance is in the powers of hell and the magic of the demons Firdawsí was compelled by the exigencies of his metre to alter the name into *Haftawda* (explained in the *Shdhdmdma* glossaries as meaning "Having seven sons"<sup>1</sup>), a form obtainable from the Pahlawí by excision of the three middle characters of the word, since the last three characters can equally well be read *-ókht* or *-wát*<sup>2</sup>

#### *Kárnámak*

"Then he sent forth people to wage war with the Worm, summoned Burjak and Burjátur before him, and took counsel with them Thereafter they took many gold and silver coins and garments, he himself [Artakhshír] put on a dress of Khurásán, came with Burjak and Burjátur to the foot of Castle Gulár, and said 'I crave of my august masters the boon of being admitted to the service of the Court' The idolaters admitted Artakhshír with the two men, and installed them in the house of the Worm Then for three days Artakhshír showed himself eager in service and devoted to the Worm The gold and silver coins and the garments he presented to the servants Then all who were in the Castle, marvelled and were loud in his praises Then said Artakhshír, 'It would give me pleasure to feed the Worm for three days with my own hand' To this the servants and attendants consented Then Artakhshír dismissed every one, and commanded an army of four hundred valiant and devoted men to conceal themselves opposite that place in a cleft of the mountain Also he commanded, 'When on the day of Ásmán<sup>3</sup> ye see smoke from the fortress of the Worm, then put forth your valour and courage and come to the

<sup>1</sup> Seven sons are ascribed to him also in the *Kárnámak*, p 51.

<sup>2</sup> Noldeke's ingenious view is, however, rejected by Darmesteter (*Études Iraniques*, vol II, pp 82-83)

<sup>3</sup> The 27th of the month

foot of the Castle On that day he himself held the molten copper while Burjak and Burjatur offered praise and glory to God When now it was the time for its meal the Worm roared as it did each day Artakhshir had previously made the attendants and watchers of the Worm drunk and senseless at a meal Then he went himself with his attendants to the Worm bringing to it the blood of oxen and sheep such as it received daily But as soon as the Worm opened its mouth to drink the blood Artakhshir poured the molten copper into its throat and when this entered its body it burst asunder into two pieces Thereupon such a roaring arose from it that all the people from the Castle rushed in thither and confusion arose amongst them Artakhshir laid his hand on his shield and sword and made a great slaughter and massacre in the Castle Then he commanded kindle a fire such that the smoke may be manifest to those knights This the servants did and when the knights who were in the mountains saw the smoke from the Castle they hastened to the foot of the Castle to help Artakhshir and forced the entrance with the cry Victorious be Artakhshir King of Kings the son of Papak!

### *Shâhnama*

Thence he returned war with the Worm to wage  
He with his warriors bold bent on its slaughter  
World tried and war wise came he with armed hosts  
Numbering two thousand over ten thousand  
When thus his scattered hosts he had assembled  
Twixt the two mountains boldly he brought them

Then spake King Ardashir unto his captain  
One who was skilled in war and wise in counsel  
Shahr gir named Taker of cities  
Watchful and wakeful thou shalt abide here  
Keeping thy scouts alert day time and night time  
Ringing thy camp around with ready horsemen  
Sentries about thee warders around thee  
By night and day shall I keep watch o'er thine army  
Such cunning wile of war now will I venture  
As did Isfandiyar my noble forbear

The allusion is to the capture of the Brazen Fortress (Ruin Dîzh) which Isfandiyar entered as a merchant See *Shâhnama* ed Macan vol iii pp 1143 et seqq

If then thy sentry by day a smoke-cloud  
Sees, or at night a fire like the sun flaming,  
Know then at last the Worm's witcheries ended,  
Know that its star is set, its strength departed'

Out of his captains then seven men chose he,  
Brave men and valiant all, lions in warfare,  
E'en from the winds of heav'n kept he his counsel  
Then from his coffers fair gems he gathered,  
Gold coins and rare brocades and rich possessions,  
Holding things priceless cheap in his prudence  
With lead and copper then two chests he crammed full,  
And, midst his baggage bound one brazen cauldron,  
Being well skilled in crafts and devices

When in this wise his wares had been chosen  
From the horse-master ten asses claimed he,  
And like an ass-herd in coarse apparel clad,  
But with his bales filled full with gold and silver  
Fared he with anxious heart forth on the forward way,  
And from the camp set his face to the fortress  
Also those two brave peasants who gave him  
Harbour and shelter once in disaster  
Chose he as comrades on his forth-faring,  
Since he had proved them loyal and wary  
Thus on the road they drew near to the fortress,  
Breasted the hill-ridge, rested to breathe again

For the Worm's service sixty were set apart,  
Eager and earnest each in his service,  
Of whom one cried aloud as they approached,  
'What have ye hidden there in your boxes?'  
Thus the King answered that stern inquiry  
'Of every precious stuff samples I bring you:  
Red gold and silver white, ornaments, raiment,  
Dínárs and fine brocades, jewels and sable  
I from Khurásán come as a merchant,  
Leaving luxurious ease for toilsome journeys  
Much wealth have I amassed by the Worm's blessing,  
And now I grateful come unto the Worm's throne,  
Since by its favour my fortunes prospered,  
Right do I deem it service to render'

When the Worm's warders thus heard the tale he told  
 Forthwith the fortress-gates wide they flung open  
 Then when his loads were laid safe in the fortress  
 Thus did the king prepare his task to finish  
 Swiftly before them spread he the wares he brought  
 Graciously gave to each what he most craved  
 Then for the warders spread he a rich repast  
 And like a servitor stood there to serve them  
 Cast loose the locks and clasps of chest and coffer  
 Brought forth a beaker brimming with date wine  
 But from the brimming bowl those who were charged  
 With the Worm's feeding turned their faces  
 Since milk and rice for its meal must they carry  
 Feared they that wine might their footsteps unsteady

Then to his feet leaped Ardashir lightly  
 Crying, With me I bear much milk and fine rice  
 Let me I pray you for days and nights three  
 Gladden my spirit with the Worm's service  
 Thus in the world fair fame shall I win me  
 And from the Worm's luck borrow new blessing  
 Blithely three days and nights quaff ye the wine cup  
 And on the fourth day when the world kindler  
 Rises a booth right royal I'll build me  
 Which shall oertop the towers of the Palace  
 I am a chapman eager for custom  
 And by the Worm much fame shall I win me

He by these cunning words his aim accomplished  
 Feed thou the Worm they cried so an it please thee  
 Thus did the ass herd win by his wiles his aim  
 While unto wine and song wended the warders

When these had drunk deep wine overcame them  
 Thus to wine worship turned they from watching  
 And when their souls were deep steeped in the wine cup  
 Forth fared the Prince with his hosts of the hamlet  
 Brought with him copper and brazen cauldron  
 Kindled a flaming fire in the white daylight  
 So to the Worm at its meal time was measured  
 In place of milk and rice much molten metal  
 Unto its trench he brought that liquid copper  
 Soft from the trench its head the Worm upraised  
 Then they beheld its tongue like brazen cymbal  
 Thrust forth to take its food as was its custom

Into its open jaws that molten metal  
 Poured he, while in the trench helpless the worm writhed.  
 Crashed from its throat the sound of fierce explosion  
 Such that the trench and whole fort fell a-quaking  
 Swift as the wind Ardashír and his comrades  
 Hastened with drawn swords, arrows, and maces  
 Of the Worm's widders, wrapped in their wine-sleep,  
 Not one escaped alive from their fierce onslaught  
 Then from the Castle-keep raised he the smoke-wreaths  
 Which his success should tell to his captains  
 Hasting to Shahr-gír swift came the sentry,  
 Crying, 'King Ardashír his task hath finished !'  
 Quickly the captain then came with his squadrons,  
 Leading his mail-clad men unto the King's aid "

We see from the above extracts not only the fidelity with which Firdawsí followed the Pahlawí legend (known to him as Noldeke has shown, not in the original, but in Persian translations), but also to what extent legends and fables gathered round the perfectly historical figure of "Artakhshír, King of kings of Persia and non-Persia, son of Pápak the King," known to us not only from historical works, but from coins and inscriptions<sup>1</sup> dating from his own time. With him, indeed, the native tradition may be said to pass from mythology to history (for the Alexander-legend, as we have already seen, is an importation from without), a point well put by the historian Ibn Wádh al-Ya'qúbí (ed. Houtsma, vol 1, pp 178-179), who flourished towards the end of the ninth century of our era, in the following words.

"Persia claims many supernatural attributes for its kings which cannot be accepted as credible, such as that one had a number of mouths and eyes, and another a face of copper,<sup>2</sup> and that on the shoulders of another grew two snakes which ate human brains,<sup>3</sup> the long duration of their lives, their keeping death from mankind, and the like

<sup>1</sup> al-Ya'qubí on Persian legend and Persian history

<sup>1</sup> At Naqsh-e-Rustam. See Ker-Porter, 1, pl xviii, p 548, Flandin, iv, pl 182

<sup>2</sup> Isfandi-yái, called *Ru'm-tan*, "having a body of brass," is probably intended

<sup>3</sup> Dahak is here meant

of this things which reason rejects and which must be referred to the category of idle tales and frivolous fables devoid of actuality. But such of the Persians as possess sense and knowledge or nobility and distinguished extraction alike princes and squires (*dihqan*) traditionalists and men of culture neither believe nor affirm nor repeat these things and we find them reckoning the Persian Empire only from [the time of] Ardashir Babakan. So we have omitted them [these legends] our method being to reject what is of ill savour.

Shapur, the son of Ardashir (the interesting legend of whose birth and recognition, given in the *Ādār nāmak*, the *Shāh nāma*,

Shapur I.

and most of the Arabian historians, I am compelled to omit for lack of space) is notable in Western

history for his successful campaigns against the "Romans and his capture of the Emperor Valerian, achievements com-

Shapur's Inscr-  
ptions and  
in name is

memorated in the sculptures of Naqsh-e Rostam and Shapur.<sup>1</sup> The Greek translation attached to

the short bilingual Pahlawi inscription of this king at Naqsh-e Rostam (which formed, as we have seen, the starting point of the decipherment of both the Sasanian and the Achæmenian inscriptions) was probably cut by some Greek

prisoner. The longer Hajiabad inscription

The Hajiabad  
inscription

still presents some difficulties, in spite of the labours of Thomas (1868), West (1869), Haug

(1870), and other scholars, and the excellent reproductions of it (casts, copies, and photographs) available. Thomas did excellent service in publishing all the available Pahlawi inscriptions, but he was more successful in decipherment than in interpretation, where his results were of the most amazing kind, for he explained several of these edicts as professions of faith on the part of the Sasanian kings in the God of the Jews and Christians, and in consequence the divergence between the translations offered by him and the other scholars mentioned is so great that Lord Curzon says in his work on *Persia* (vol. II, pp. 116-117) —

"That the decipherment of the Pehlevi character has reached no scientific stage of development is manifest from the different readings that have been given of the Hájíábád lines, and sooner than pin my faith either to the philo-Christian theory of Mr Thomas, or to the bowshot theory of Dr M Haug, although I believe the latter has secured the verdict of most scholars, I prefer the security of unshamed ignorance"

No one, however, who is at all capable of weighing the evidence can doubt the general correctness of the renderings of Haug and West, who had the advantage over Thomas of being familiar with the book Pahlawí. Out of the 115 words which constitute the Sásánian-Pahlawí version, not more than half a dozen are uncertain in meaning (though unfortunately they are of importance for the understanding of the sense), and the meaning of the first six lines and a half is perfectly certain. The difficulty of fully comprehending the whole largely arises from our absence of information as to the nature of the ceremony described, and the exact object of the shooting of the arrow by the King out of this lonely little cave. Parallels, however, are not wanting, and evidently the shooting of an arrow to determine a site was not unusual in Sásánian times. Thus Tabarí (Noldeke's translation, pp. 263-264) and Dínawarí (p 66) tell us that when the Persian general Wahriz, the conqueror and governor of Yemen, felt his death approaching, he called for his bow and arrows, bade his retainers raise him up, and shot an arrow into the air, commanding those who stood by him to mark where it fell, and to build a mausoleum for his body there, and it is very probable that the shot which forms the subject of the Hájí-ábád inscription was made for some similar purpose, which, were it known, would greatly facilitate the full explanation of the inscription.\*

\* That the practice of determining a site by shooting an arrow continued into Muhammadan times, and was used by the Arabs as well as the Persians, is shown by a passage in al-Baládhurí's *Kitabu futúhu'l-buldan* (ed de Goeje, p 276) Compare II Kings xiii, 14-19

We ought, however, to refer in this connection to a very ingenious attempt at a new translation of this inscription made by Friedrich Muller in the *Vienna Oriental Journal* for 1892 (vol vi, pp 71-75). Citing for illustration and comparison a passage from the Iliad (xxiii, 852) and an episode from the life of Charles VI (M Bermann's *Maria Theresa u Joseph II*, p 38), he takes *mino* (translated by Haug as "spirit") as a conventional honorific epithet of Royalty at this time (similar to "sublime" in modern Turkey and Persia and "celestial" in China), *chetak* (= Baluchi *chedag*, "a stone arrow") as a pillar set up as a target (= Homer's *ιστορ*), and *wajâk* as a bird (= Homer's *τρηρων πελεια*), and thus translates the enigmatical inscription

This is the edict of me the Mazdā worshipper Shahpuhr placed amongst the gods king of kings of Persia and non Persia of celestial descent from God son of the Mazda worshipper Artakhshatr placed amongst the gods king of kings of Persia of celestial descent from God grandson of Papak placed amongst the gods the king

And when we shot this arrow then we shot it in the presence of the Satraps the Princes the Great ones and the Nobles we set the foot on this stone and shot out the arrow at one of these targets where the arrow was shot however there was no bird at hand where if the targets had been rightly set up the arrow would have been found outwardly visible [or sticking in the ground]

Then we ordered a target specially set apart for His Majesty to be erected in this place The Celestial hand [i.e. the hand of His Majesty] wrote this Let no one set foot on this stone or shoot an arrow at this target Then I shot the arrow destined for the Royal use at these targets

This hath the hand [of the king] written

More probably in this place for Noldeke (Stoltze's *Persopolis* vol II Introduction) reads the word hitherto supposed to be *digî* or *dikî* as *duki* = Aramaic *dukhâ* place

2. *Manes and the Manichæans.*

At the end of the Parthian period, in the fourth year of King Ardawān (A.D. 215-216), as we learn from the *Chronology of Ancient Nations* (Sachau's translation, p. 121) of the learned al-Bīrūnī (early eleventh century),  
Manes and his doctrine was born Manes, or Mānī, the founder of the Manichæan religion a religion which, notwithstanding the fierce persecutions to which it was exposed both in the East and the West, alike at the hands of Zoroastrians and Christians, from the very moment of its appearance until the extermination of the unfortunate Albigenses in the thirteenth century, continued for centuries to count numerous adherents, and to exercise an immense influence on religious thought both in Asia and Europe

In the system which he founded Manes was essentially eclectic ; but though he drew materials both from the ancient Babylonian and from the Buddhist religions, his main endeavour was, as Gibbon has said, "to reconcile the doctrines of Zoroaster and Christ," an attempt which resulted in his being "pursued by the two religions with equal and unrelenting hatred" His system, however, is to be regarded rather as a Christianised Zoroastrianism than as a Zoroastrianised Christianity, since he was certainly a Persian subject, and probably at least half a Persian, wrote one of his books (the *Shāburgān*, or *Shāhpūrnakān*, characterised by the Muhammadan al-Bīrūnī as "of all Persian books one that may be relied upon," since "Mānī in his law has forbidden telling lies, and he had no need whatever for falsifying history") in Persian for King Shāpūr, whose conversion he hoped to effect, and was finally put to a cruel death by one of Shāpūr's successors<sup>1</sup>

The sources of our information about the life, doctrines, and writings of Manes are both Eastern and Western, and since

<sup>1</sup> Hormuzd, Bahram I or Bahram II (see Noldeke's *Gesch. d. Sasan*, p. 47, n. 5 *ad calc.*)

the former (notably the *Fihrist*, *al Birûnî*, *Ibn Wâdih al-Ya'qubî* and *Shahrîstânî*\*) have been made accessible, it has been generally recognised that the information which they yield us is of a more reliable character than that contained in the writings of St Augustine, the Acts of Archelaus, &c, on which the older European accounts of this remarkable man are entirely based; considerations of space render it impossible to devote more than a few pages to this topic, which will be found fully discussed in the books cited at the end of the last note, we will therefore give a translation of al Ya'qubî's account of the life and doctrines of Manes (this being the only one of the four Arabic authorities above enumerated which is not at present accessible in a European translation), and then add such few remarks as may appear necessary for the further elucidation of the outlines of the subject.

Al Ya'qubî says —

And in the days of Shâpur the son of Ardashîr appeared Mani the Zindîq the son of Hammad who invited Shapur to Dualism and cast censure upon his religion (i.e. Zoroastrianism) and Shapur inclined to him. And Mani said that the Controller of the Universe was twofold and that there were two Eternal Principles Light and Darkness two creators the Creator of Good and the Creator of Evil. The Darkness and the Light each one of them connotes in itself five ideas Colour Taste Smell Touch and Sound whereby these two do hear and know and what is good and beneficial is from the Light while what is hurtful and calamitous is from the Darkness.

Now these two [principles] were [at first] unmixed then they came mixed and the proof of this is that there was [at first] no

*Fihrist* (composed A.D. 987) ed Flügel pp 328-338 and the same with German translation introduction and notes also by Flügel (1862) *Birûnî's Chronology* translated by Sachau pp 780-1189 1917 5, 3 *Ibn Wâdih* ed Houtsma vol 1 pp 180-18 *Shahrîstânî* translated into German by Haarbrucker 1 pp 285-291. See also besides Hausshofer (1734) and Mosheim Baur Kessler and Spiegel's *Iranische Alterthumskunde* vol II pp 195-32.

phenomenon, then afterwards phenomena were produced. And the Darkness anticipated the Light in this admixture, for they were [at first] in mutual contact like the shadow and the sun, and the proof of this is the impossibility of the production of anything save from something else. And the Darkness anticipated the Light in admixture, because, since the admixture of the Darkness with the Light was injurious to the latter, it is impossible that the Light should have made the first beginning [therein], for the Light is by its nature the Good. And the proof that these two, Good and Evil, were eternal, is that if one substance be posited, two opposite actions will not proceed from it. Thus, for example, Fire [which is], hot and burning, cannot refrigerate, while that which refrigerates cannot heat, and that wherefrom good results cannot produce evil, while from that which produces evil good cannot result. And the proof that these two principles are living and active is that good results from the action of this, and evil from the action of that.

"So Shápúr accepted this doctrine from him, and urged his subjects to do the same. And this thing was grievous unto them, and the wise men from amongst the people of his kingdom united in dissuading him from this, but he did not do [what they demanded]. And Mání composed books wherein he affirmed the Two Principles, and of his writings was the book which he entitled *Kanzu'l Ihyá* ('the Treasure of Vivification,')<sup>1</sup> wherein he describes what of salvation wrought by the Light and of corruption wrought by the Darkness exists in the soul, and refers reprehensible actions to the Darkness; and a book which he named *Sháburqán*, wherein he describes the delivered soul and that which is mingled with the devils and with defects, and makes out heaven to be a flat surface, and asserts that the world is on a sloping mountain on which the high heaven revolves, and a book which he named *Kitábul-Hudá wa't-Tadbír* ('the Book of Guidance and Administration'), and the 'Twelve Gospels,' whereof he named each after one of the letters of the alphabet, and described Prayer, and what must be done for the deliverance of the soul, and the *Sifw'l-Asáí* ('Book of Secrets'),<sup>2</sup> wherein he finds fault with the miracles of the prophets, and the *Sifw'l-Jabábna* ('Book of the Giants'); besides which he has many other books and epistles.

"So Shápúr continued in this doctrine for some ten years. Then the *Múbadh* (Fire-priest) came to him and said, 'This man hath

<sup>1</sup> See Flügel's *Mání*, n 324, Θησαυρος ζωῆς

<sup>2</sup> See Flügel, *op cit*, pp 102-103, where the contents of this book are briefly stated from the *Fihrist*. It contained eighteen chapters

corrupted thy religion confront me with him that I may dispute with him So he confronted them and the Mubadh bested him in argument and Shāpur returned from Dualism to the Magian religion and resolved to put Māni to death but he fled away and came to the lands of India where he abode until Shāpur died

Then Shapur was succeeded by his son Hurmuz a valiant man and he it was who built the city of Ram Hurmuz but his days were not prolonged He reigned one year

Then reigned Bahram the son of Hurmuz who concerned himself [only] with his minions and amusements And Mani's disciples wrote to him saying There hath succeeded to the throne a king young in years greatly preoccupied [with his amusements] So he returned to the land of Persia and his doings became noised abroad and his place [of abode] became known Then Bahram summoned him and questioned him concerning his doctrine and he related to him his circumstances Then [Bahram] confronted him with the Mubadh who disputed with him and said Let molten lead be poured on my belly and on thine and whichever of us shall be unhurt thereby he will be in the right But [Mani] replied This is a deed of the Darkness So Bahram ordered him to be imprisoned and said to him When morning comes I will send for thee and will slay thee in such wise as none hath been slain before thee

So all that night Mani was being slayed until his spirit departed [from his body] And when it was morning, Bahram sent for him and they found him [already] dead So he ordered his head to be cut off and his body to be stuffed with straw and he persecuted his followers and slew of them a great multitude And Bahram the son of Hurmuz reigned three years.

The account of Mani given in the *Fihrist* is much fuller, but as it is accessible to all who read German in Flügel's translation, only a few important points will here be mentioned His father's name is given as *Futtaq* (the arabicised form of a Persian name, probably Pataka, represented by Western writers as Πατέλιος Patecius, Phatecius, and Patricius), and he was a

This molten brass ordeal is repeatedly mentioned both in the Pahlawi and Arabic books Amongst the former see Haug's ed and translation of the *Arda Viraf Namak* p 144 especially the passages from the *Dinkard* cited in the note and also the *Shikand Gumanik Vijay* (ed. West) p xli Amongst the latter see al Qazwini's *Īshārāt il-Bilād* p 67 The test is also said to have been proposed to Manes in the Persian *Tārīkh-i Gušda* (Cambridge MS marked Dd 3 3 f 45a)

native of Hamadán, but migrated thence to Babyſonia (Bádaráyá and Bákusáyá) and joined himself to the *Mughtasila*, a sect closely akin to the Mandæans, from whom Mání probably derived his hatred both of the Jewish religion and also of idolatry. His mother's name is variously given as Mār Maryam, Utákhím and Mays, and it is at least possible that she was of the race of the Ashghánís, or Parthian royal family, which, if true, would afford another ground for the mistrust entertained towards him by the Sásánian kings. He was born, according to his own statement in the book called *Sháburqân*, cited by al-Bírúní, in A.D. 215 or 216, and was deformed by a limp in one leg. Before his birth the Angel *Tawm* made known to his mother his high mission in dreams, but he only began to receive revelations at the age of twelve (or thirteen, A.D. 227-8, according to al-Bírúní), and not till he reached the age of twenty-four was he commissioned to make known his doctrine. His public announcement of his claims is said to have been solemnly made before King Shápúr on the day of his coronation, March 20, A.D. 242, and it was probably through the King's brother Pírúz, whom he had converted to his doctrines, that he succeeded in obtaining admission on so great an occasion of state. His long journeyings in India and the East probably followed his loss of the King's favour. That his ultimate return to Persia and barbarous execution took place during the short reign of Bahrám I (A.D. 273-6), is asserted by al-Bírúní, al-Ya'qúbí, and Tabarí.

"Manichæanism," says the first (Sachau's translation, p. 191), "increased by degrees under Ardashír, his son Shápúr, and Hurmuzd son of Shapúr, until the time when Bahram the son of Hurmuzd ascended the throne. He gave orders to search for Mání, and when he had found him, he said 'This man has come forward calling people to destroy the world. It will be necessary to begin by destroying him, before anything of his plans should be realised.' It is well known that he killed Maní, stripped off his skin, filled it with grass, and hung it up at the gate of Jundê-Shápúr, which is still known as the *Gate of Manes*. Hurmuzd also killed a number of the

Manichæans. I have heard the Ispahbadh Marzubân the son of Pütüm say that Shapur banished him out of his empire faithful to the Law of Zoroaster which demands the expulsion of pseudo-prophets from the country. He imposed on him the obligation never to return. So Mani went off to India, China and Thibet and there preached his gospel. Afterwards he returned and was seized by Bahram and put to death for having broken the stipulation whereby he had forfeited his life.

What, now, was this "gospel" which so aroused the enmity of the Zoroastrian priesthood, and which (to speak of the East only) was still so active in the latter part of the eighth century, that the 'Abbāsī Caliph al Mahdī appointed a special inquisitor, called *Sahibū* (or '*Arifu*') *z-Zanadiqa*, to detect and punish those who under the outward garb of Islam, held the doctrines of the Manichæans or Zindiqs? And what was the exact meaning of this term Zindiq, which, originally used to denote the Manichæans, was gradually, and is still, applied to all atheists and heretics in Muhammadan countries?

Let us take the last inquiry first, as that which may be most briefly answered. The ordinary explanation is that the term *Zandik* is a Persian adjective meaning "one who follows the *Zand*," or traditional explanation (see pp 78-9 *supra*) in preference to the Sacred Text, and that the Manichæans were so called because of their disposition to interpret and explain the scriptures of other religions in accordance with their own ideas, by a process akin to the *γνωσις* of the gnostics and the *ta'wil* of the later Isma'īlīs. But Professor Bevan has proposed a much more probable explanation. We know from the *Fihrist* (Flügel's *Mānī*, p 64) and *al-Birūnī* (transl Sachau, p 190) that while the term *Sammā'* ("Listener," "Auditor") was applied to the lower grades of Manichæans, who did not wish to take upon them all the obligations concerning poverty, celibacy, and

The term *Zanlikh* occurs in the *Maniyō-i Khurd* (ed West 1871 ch xxxi, p 37) and is explained as "thinking well of the devils" (pp 22-23).

mortification imposed by the religion, the "saints and ascetics" amongst them, who were commanded "to prefer poverty to riches, to suppress cupidity and lust, to abandon the world, to be abstinent in it, continually to fast, and to give alms as much as possible," were called *Ṣiddīq*, "the Faithful" (pl *Ṣiddīqīn*). This word is Arabic, but the original Aramaic form was probably *Saddīqai*, which in Persian became *Zandīk*, the replacement of the *dd* by *nd* finding its parallel in the Persian *shanbadh* (modern *shanba*) for *Sabbath*, and the conversion of the Sanskrit *Siddhānta* into *Sindhind*. According to this view, *Zandīk* (Aīabicised into *Zindīq*) is merely the Persianised form of the Aramaic name applied to the fully initiated Manichæans, and, primarily applied to that sect exclusively, was only later used in the sense of "heretic" in general. An interesting parallel, as Professor Bevan points out, is supplied by the derivation of the German *Ketzer*, "heretic," from *καθαροί*, "the pure."<sup>1</sup>

The Manichæans, as we have seen, like the followers of Marcion and Bardesanes, were reckoned by Muhammadan writers amongst the "Dualists" But since the Doctrines of the Manichæans Zoroastrian religion is also essentially dualistic, whence arose the violent antagonism between it and the Manichæan doctrine? The answer is not far to seek. In the former the Good and the Evil Creation, the realm of Ahura Mazda and that of Ania Mainyush (Ahriman), each comprised a spiritual and a material part. Not only the Amshaspands and Angels, but also the material elements and all animals and plants useful to man, and of mankind those who held "the Good Religion," fought on the side of Ahura Mazda against the *dlvs* and *drujes*, the *khrafstars*, or noxious animals, the witches and warlocks, the misbelievers and heretics, who constituted the hosts of Ahriman. In general the Zoroastrian religion, for all its elaborately systematised Spiritual Hierarchies,

<sup>1</sup> Cf C Schmidt's *Hist et doctrine de la Secte des Cathares ou Albigeois* (Paris, 1849)

presents itself as an essentially material religion, in the sense that it encouraged its followers to "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and to "sow the seed and reap the harvest with enduring toil". According to the Manichæan view, on the other hand, the admixture of the Light and the Darkness which gave rise to the material universe was essentially evil, and a result of the activity of the Powers of Evil, it was only good in so far as it afforded a means of escape and return to its proper sphere to that portion of the Light ("Jesus patibilis" see Spiegel, *Eran Alt*, II, p. 226), which had become entangled in the darkness and when this deliverance was, so far as possible, effected, the angels who supported the heavens and upheld the earth would relax their hold, the whole material universe would collapse, and the Final Conflagration would mark the Redemption of the Light and its final dissociation from the irredeemable and indestructible Darkness. Meanwhile, by the "Column of Praise" (consisting of the prayers, doxologies and good works of the faithful ascending up to Heaven, and visible as the Milky Way), the particles of Light, set free from their imprisonment in the Darkness, ascend upwards, and are ferried across by the Sun and Moon to the "Paradise of Light, which is their proper home. All that tends to the prolongation of this state of admixture of Light and Darkness such as marriage and the begetting of children, is consequently regarded by Manes and his followers as evil and reprehensible, and thus we see what King Hurmuz meant by the words, "This man has come forward calling people to destroy the world" (Zoroastrianism was national, militant, materialistic, imperialist, Manichæanism, cosmopolitan, quietist, ascetic, unworldly, the two systems stood in essential antagonism, and, for all their external resemblances (fully

Cf Darmesteter's English translation of the *Avesta* in *S B E* vol. I p. 46 and n. 1 *ad calc.* on Fargard IV. 47.

See Flügel's *Mânî* p. 31 Spiegel's *Eran Alterthumskunde* vol. II p. 17.

indicated by Spiegel in his *Erānische Alterthumskunde*, vol. II, pp 195-232), were inevitably hostile and radically opposed. In the case of Judaism, orthodox Christianity and Islām, the antagonism was equally great, and if the Manichæans suffered less at the hands of the Jews than of the other three religions, it was the power rather than the will which these lacked, since, as we have seen, Judaism was held by Manes in particular abhorrence

Into the details of the Manichæan doctrine the causes which led to the admixture of the Darkness and the Light; their theories concerning the "King of the Paradises of Light," the Primal Man, the Devil, and the mechanism of the material universe as a means for liberating the Light from its captivity; and then grotesque beliefs concerning Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, *Haklmatu'd-Dahr* ("the World-wise") and *Ibnatu'l-Hirs* ("the Daughter of Desire"), Rawfaryád, Barfaryád, and Sháthil (Seth), and the like, it is not possible to enter in this place. As a set-off against their rejection of the Hebrew prophets the Manichæans recognised not only Zoroaster and Buddha as divine messengers, but also Christ, though here they distinguished between the True Christ, who was, in their view, an Apparition from the World of Light clad in a merely phantasmal body, and His counterpart and antagonist, "the Son of the Widow" who was crucified. It is a curious thing that this belief of the Manichæans was adopted by Muhammad: in the Qur'án (*shū'a* IV, v. 156) it is written.

"And for their saying, 'Verily we slew the Messiah, Jesus the Son of Mary, the Apostle of God,' but they did not slay Him or crucify Him, but the matter was made doubtful to them [or, a similitude was made for them] And verily those who differ about Him are in doubt concerning Him, they have no knowledge concerning Him, but only follow an opinion. They did not kill Him, for sure! but God raised Him up unto Himself, for God is mighty and wise!"

As regards the history of the Manichæans in the East, we have already mentioned that during the Caliphate of al-Mahdí

From the East  
of Manichæism  
in the East.

(A D 775-785), the father of Harun r Rashid, they were so numerous that a special Inquisitor was appointed to detect and destroy them. The

author of the *Fihrist* (A D 988) knew 300 professed Manichæans at Baghdad alone, and al Biruni (A D 1000) was familiar with their books, especially the *Shaburqân* (the one book composed by Manes in Persian, i.e. Pahlawi for the other six of his principal writings were in Syriac) which he cites in several places, including the opening words (Sachau's translation, p 190), which run thus —

Wisdom and deeds have always from time to time been brought to mankind by the messengers of God. So in one age they have been brought by the messenger of God called Buddha to India in another by Zoroaster to Persia in another by Jesus to the West. Thereafter this relation has come down this prophecy in this last age through me Mânî the Messenger of the God of Truth to Babylonia

The migrations of the Manichæans are thus described in the *Fihrist* —

The Manichæans were the first religious community to enter the lands of Transoxiana beside the Shamanists. The reason of this was that when the Kusra (Bahram) slew Mânî and crucified him and forbade the people of his kingdom to dispute about religion he took to killing the followers of Mânî wherever he found them wherefore they continued to flee before him until they crossed the river of Balkh and entered the dominions of the Khaqan (or Khan) with whom they abode. Now Khaqan (or Khan) in their tongue is a title conferred by them on the king of the Turks. So the Manichæans settled in Transoxiana until such time as the power of the Persians was broken and that of the Arabs waxed strong whereupon they returned to these lands (Iraq or Babylonia) especially during the break up of the Persian Empire and the days of the Umayyad kings. Khalid b Abdullah al Qasri took them under his protection but

A powerful protector of the Manichæans put to death by the Caliph al Walid in A D 743. See Flügel's *Mânî* pp 320-322

the leadership [of the sect] was not conferred save in Babylonia, in these lands, after which the leader would depart into whatever land would afford him most security. Their last migration took place in the days of al-Muqtadir (A D 908-932), when they retired to Khurásán for fear of their lives, while such as remained of them concealed their religion, and wandered through these regions. About five hundred men of them collected at Samarqand, and their doctrines became known. The governor of Khurásán would have slain them, but the King of China (by whom I suspect the ruler of the Taghazghaz to be meant) sent unto him saying, 'There are in my domains double the number of Muhammadans that there are in thine of my co-religionists,' and swearing to him that should he kill one of the latter, he would slay the whole of the former to avenge him, and would destroy the mosques, and would establish an inquisition against the Muhammadans in the rest of his dominions and slay them. So the Governor of Khurásán let them alone, only taking from them the *jizya* (poll-tax on non-Muslims). So they diminished in numbers in the lands of Islam, but in the City of Peace (Baghdad) I used to know some three hundred of them in the days of Mu'izzu'd-Dawla (A D 946-967). But in these our days there are not five of them left at the capital. And these people are named Ájarí, and they reside in the suburbs of Samarqand, Sughd, and especially Nuwíkhath."

Of those who, while outwardly professing Islám, were really Manichæans, the author of the *Fihrist* gives a long list, which includes al-Ja'd b Dirham, who was put to death by the Umayyad Caliph Hishám (A D 724-743); the poet Bashshár b Buid, put to death in A D 784; nearly all the Barmecides, except Muhammad b. Khálid b Barmak; the Caliph al-Ma'mún (A D 813-833), but this is not credited by the author; Muhammad ibnu'z-Zayyát, the Wazír of al-Mu'tasim, put to death in A D 847; and others.

The Manichæans were divided into five grades the *Mu'allimín* or Teachers, called "the Sons of Tenderness", the *Mushammásún* or those illuminated by the Sun,<sup>1</sup> called "the Sons of Knowledge"; the *Qisslún* or priests, called "the Sons of Under-

Duties imposed  
on the Mani-  
chæans.

<sup>1</sup> See Flügel's *Mání*, pp. 294-299. The meaning is uncertain.

standing', the *Siddiqun* or faithful, called "the Sons of the Unseen" and the *Sammd'un* or hearers, called "the Sons of Intelligence." They were commanded to perform the four or the seven prayers, and to abandon idol worship, falsehood, covetousness, murder, fornication, theft, the teaching and study of all art of deception and magic, hypocrisy in religion and lukewarmness in daily life. To these ten commandments were added belief in the four Supreme Essences—to wit, God ("the King of the Paradises of Light"), His Light, His Power, and His Wisdom, fasting for seven days in each month, and the acceptance of "the three seals," called by St. Augustine and other Christian writers the *signacula cruris, manuum et sinus*, typifying the renunciation of evil words, evil deeds, and evil thoughts, and corresponding to the *hukht, huvarsht, and humat* (good words, good deeds, and good thoughts) of the Zoroastrian religion. Details of the fasts and prayers, and some of the formulæ used in the latter, are also given in the *Fihrist*, from which we also learn something of the schisms which arose after Mânî's time as to the Spiritual Supremacy, the chief divisions being the *Mshriyya* and the *Miqldsiyya*. The seven books of Mânî (of which, as has been already said, six were in Syriac and one—the *Shâburqân*—in Pahlawî) were written in

The writt<sup>g</sup>  
in ed by  
Manes.

a peculiar script invented by their author and reproduced (in a form greatly corrupted and disfigured in the existing MSS) by the *Fihrist*.

To this script, and to the art of writing in general, the Manichæans (like the modern Babis, who, as is well known, have also invented a script peculiar to themselves called *khatt-i badî*, "the New Writing") would appear to have devoted much attention, for al Jâhidh (ninth century) cites Ibrahim as-Sindî as saying that "it would be well if they were to spend less on the whitest, finest paper and the blackest ink, and on the training of calligraphists."

The 1 g ndary  
Araba g-i Mânî

From this, as Professor Bevan conjectures, arose the idea of Mânî as a skilful painter which is prevalent in

Persia, where it is generally believed that he produced a picture-book called the *Arzhang* or *Artang*, to which he appealed (as Muhammad appealed to the *Qur'án*) as a proof of his supernatural power and divine mission.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. *Núshírwán and Mazdak.*

“I was born,” the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, “in the reign of the Just King,” meaning thereby Khusraw *Anúshak-rúbân* (“of Immortal Spirit”), who is still spoken of by the Persians as “Núshírwán the Just” and regarded as the perfect type of kingly virtue. We have already seen that this verdict cannot be accepted without reserve, and that Núshírwán’s vigorous measures against heretics rather than his justice (in our sense of the term) won him the applause and approval of the Magian priests by whose hands the national chronicles were shaped; just as the slur which rests on the name of the first Yazdigird (called *Baza-gar*, “the Sinner”) is to be ascribed rather to his tolerance of other religions and his indifference to the Zoroastrian clergy than to any special wickedness of life. Yet Núshírwán, though severe on heretics whose activity threatened the welfare of the State, was by no means a fanatic, but on the contrary interested himself greatly in foreign religions and philosophies. In this respect he reminds us of the Caliph at Ma’mún and the Emperor Akbar, both of whom took the same delight in religious and philosophical controversies and speculations. Noldeke (*Gesch d Sasaniden*, p 150, n. 3 *ad calc*), who is by no means disposed to look favourably on the Persians, gives, on the whole, a very favourable summary of his character, which he concludes in the following words: “On the whole Khusraw (Núshírwán) is certainly one of the greatest and best kings whom the Persians ever possessed, which, however, did not prevent him from being capable of

<sup>2</sup> Cf *Shahnama*, ed Macan, vol iii, pp 1453-1454

reckless cruelty, nor from having little more regard for the truth than the Persians, even the best, are wont to have" His suppression of the Mazdakites, his successful campaigns against the "Romans" (Byzantines), his wise laws, his care for the national defences, and the prosperity enjoyed by the Persian Empire during his reign (A.D. 531-578) all conduced to the high reputation which he enjoys in the East as an ideal monarch, while his reception of the seven Greek philosophers, expelled from their native land by the intolerance of the Emperor Justinian, and his insertion of a special clause in their favour (whereby they were guaranteed toleration and freedom from interference on their return thither) in a treaty which he concluded with the Byzantines at the close of a successful war, as well as his love of knowledge, exemplified not only by his patronage of learned men, but by the establishment of a great medical school at Junde Shapur, and by the numerous translations from Greek and Sanskrit into Pahlavi executed by his orders, caused it to be believed, even in the West, "that a disciple of Plato was seated on the Persian throne."

The importance of the visit to the Persian Court of the Neo Platonist philosophers mentioned above has, I think, hardly been sufficiently emphasised. How much the later mysticism of the Persians, the doctrine of the Sufis, which will be fully discussed in a later chapter, owes to Neo-Platonism, is beginning to be recognised, and has been admirably illustrated by my friend and former pupil Mr R. A. Nicholson, late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, in his *Selected Poems from the Divân of Shams-i Tabriz* (Cambridge, 1898) nor, if Darmesteter's views be correct, did Zoroastrianism disdain to draw materials from the same source. The great historical introduction of Greek philosophical and scientific ideas into

See the excellent account of Nushîrwân given by Gibbon (*Decline and Fall* ed 1813 vol vii pp 98-304)

the East took place, as is well known, during the early 'Abbásid period, especially during the reign of Hárunu'r-Rashíd's son al-Ma'mún (A.D. 813-833), but it is exceedingly probable (though, owing to the loss of the great bulk of Pahlawí literature, especially the non-religious portion, it cannot be proved) that already in the sixth century, during the reign of Núshírwán, this importation had begun, and that the beginnings of the Súfí doctrines, as of so many others, may in reality go back beyond the Muhammadan to the Sásánian times. As regards the Christians, Núshírwán's contempt for their pacific doctrines and vexation at the rebellious behaviour of his son Anúsha-zádh (see p. 136 *supra*) did not prevent him from according certain privileges to the dangerous and often disloyal Monophysites,<sup>1</sup> or from accepting in one of his treaties with the Byzantine Emperor certain stipulations in favour of the Catholics;<sup>2</sup> nay, it was even asserted by Euagrius and Sebêos<sup>3</sup> that he was privately baptized before his death, which statement, though certainly false, shows that he was generally regarded as favourably disposed towards the Christians, who, as Noldeke remarks, gave a touching proof of their gratitude for his favours a century later when they would not suffer the remains of his unfortunate descendant Yazdigird III, the last ruler of the House of Sásán, to lie unburied. Such toleration, however, was always subject to considerations of the safety of the State and the order of social life, both of which were threatened by the doctrines of the communist Mazdak, of whom we shall now speak.

The evidence which has come down to us concerning this remarkable man has been carefully collected by Noldeke<sup>3</sup> in

<sup>1</sup> See Noldeke, *Gesch. d. Sassaniden*, p. 162 *ad calc.*

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, *op. cit.*, p. 305, n. 52 *ad calc.*

<sup>3</sup> See also a more popular account by the same scholar in the *Deutsche Rundschau* for February, 1879, pp. 284 *et seqq.*

The most ancient and authentic notices of, or references to, Mazdak are as follows —

the fourth Excursus (*Ueber Mazdak und die Mazdakiten*, pp 455-467) appended to his admirable History of the Sásánians, which we have already had occasion to cite so frequently. It must naturally be borne in mind that this rests entirely on the statements of persons (whether Zoroastrian or Christian) who were bitterly opposed to his teaching, and that if the case for the defence had been preserved we might find favourable features, or at least extenu

Mazdak the  
Communist

(i) In the Pahlawi translation of the Vendidad Fargard iv v 49 the words of the Avesta text *it is this man who can strike against the ungodly* Source of Ashemaoha (i.e. fiend or heretic) who does not eat are illustrated by the gloss like Mazdak son of Bamdadh while other references to the accursed Mazdak occur in the *Bahman Yast* which however is one of the latest products of Pahlawi literature and is in its extant form referred by West to about the twelfth century of our era. There also existed a Pahlawi *Ma dak ndmak*, or Book of Mazdak which was one of the numerous Pahlawi works translated into Arabic by Ibnul Muqaffa but this unfortunately is lost though its contents are to some extent preserved by other Arabic writers

2. Greek. (ii) In Greek references to Mazdak occur in the works of Procopius Theophanes and John Malalas

(iii) In Syriac in the Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite (Wright's ed and transl § xx) who speaks of King Kawad's evil conduct

3. Syriac. in re-establishing the abominable sect of the Magi which is called that of the Zaradushtakan which teaches that women should be in common

(iv) In Arabic, accounts of Mazdak are given by *al Ya qubi* (c. A.H. 260 ed Houtsma vol I p 186) who mentions that he and his master Zaratusht Khurragan were put to death by Anushirwan *Ibn Qutayba* († A.H. 70-76 *Kitābul Ma drif* ed Wustenfeld 1850,

4. Arabic. p 328) *Dinawari* († A.H. 28-90 ed Guirgass p 69) *Tabari* († A.H. 310 ed de Goeje Series I vol II pp 885-886 = Noldeke's transl pp 140-144 pp 893-894 = Noldeke pp 154-155) *Ham a* of Isfahan (early fourth century of Hiyra) *Eutychius* († A.H. 38) *Masudi* († A.H. 346 *Murujul Dhahab* ed B. de Meynard vol II pp 195-196) *al Biruni* († A.H. 440 Sachau's translation p 192) *Shahrastani* († A.H. 548 *Kitābul milal* ed Cureton, pp 19-194 = Haarbrucker's transl pp 291-293) *Ibnu l Athir* († A.H. 630) *Abul Fidd* († A.H. 732 ed Fleischer pp 88-91) and other historians

(v) In Persian the narratives in the *Shahindma* of Firdawsi (ed Macan vol III pp 1617-1616) and the *Siyāsat nāma* of the *Nādhmul Mulk* (ed Schefer pp 166-181) deserve especial mention

ating circumstances, of which we now know nothing. What, for example, to take an analogous case from modern times, would be our judgment of the Bábís if we depended solely on the highly-coloured and malicious presentations of their doctrines and practices contained in such official chronicles as the *Ndsiḵhu 't-Tawárikh* of the court-historian *Lisánu'l-Mulk*, or of the talented Rizá-qulí Khán's supplement to the *Rawzatü's-Safá*, or even of presumably unprejudiced Europeans who were dependent for their information on the accounts current in court circles? In this connection it is worthy of remark that the charges of communism and antinomianism, especially in what concerns the relation of the sexes, were those most frequently brought alike against the Mazdakites of the sixth and the Bábís of the nineteenth century by their opponents, and since we now know that the alleged communism of the early Bábís, so far as it existed at all, was merely incidental, as in the similar case of the early Christians, and cannot be regarded as in any sense a characteristic of their doctrines, we cannot avoid a suspicion that the same thing holds true in some degree of Mazdak and his followers.

Whether Mazdak himself originated the doctrines associated with his name is doubtful, a certain Zarádušt the son of Khurragán, of Fasá in the province of Fárs, being mentioned in some of the sources as their real author. Of the theoretical basis of this doctrine we know much less than of its practical outcome, but Noldeke well remarks that "what sharply distinguishes it from modern Communism and Socialism (so far as these show themselves, not in the dreams of individuals, but in actual parties), is its religious character." All evils, in Mazdak's view, were to be attributed to the demons of Envy, Wrath, and Greed, who had destroyed the equality of mankind decreed and desired by God, which equality it was his aim to restore. The ascetic element which has been already noticed (p 161 *supra*) as one of the features of Manichæanism to which the Zoroastrians so

Doctrines of  
Mazdak

strongly objected also appears in the religion of Mazdak in the prohibition of shedding blood and eating meat. Indeed, as we have already seen (p 169 n 1 *ad calc*), to the Zoroastrian theologians Mazdak was *par excellence* "the ungodly Ashemaogha who does not eat."

For political reasons, of which, according to Noldeke's view, the chief was a desire to curb the excessive power of the priests and nobles, King Kawádh (or Qubad) favoured the new doctrine, an action which led to his temporary deposition in favour of his brother Jámásp. This untoward event probably produced a considerable alteration in his feelings towards the new sect, and the balance of testimony places in the last years of his reign that wholesale slaughter of the Mazdakites with which, in the popular legend, Khusraw the First is credited, and by which he is said to have earned his title of Nushírwán (*Anushak rubán*, "Of Immortal Spirit"). According to the current account (given in its fullest form in the *Siyásat náma* of the Nidhamul Mulk (ed Schefer, pp 166-181 transl pp 245-266), Prince Nushirwan, after exposing the evil designs and juggler's tricks of Mazdak to his father King Kawadh, deceived the heresiarch by a feigned submission, and fixed a day when, in presence of all the Mazdakites, he would make formal and public profession of the new doctrine. Invitations were issued to the Mazdakites to a great banquet which the prince would provide in one of the royal gardens but as each group entered the garden they were seized by soldiers who lay in wait for them, slain, and buried head downwards in the earth with their feet protruding. When all had been thus disposed of, Nushirwan invited Mazdak, whom he had himself received in private audience, to take a walk with him through the garden before the banquet, and to inspect the produce thereof. On entering the garden, "Behold," said the prince, pointing to the upturned feet of the dead heretics, "the crop which your evil doctrines have brought forth!" Therewith he made a sign, and Mazdak

Rise and fall of  
the Mazdakites.

Massacre of the  
Mazdakites (A.D.  
58-9)

was at once seized, bound and buried alive head downwards in the midst of a large mound of earth specially prepared for him in the middle of the garden. A contemporary account of the massacre by an eyewitness, Contemporary testimony Timotheus the Persian, has been preserved to us by Theophanes and John Malalas. The presence at this horrible scene of the Christian bishop Bazanes, who was also the King's physician, finds a curious parallel in recent times, for Dr Polak, court-physician to the late Násiru'd-Dín Sháh, was present at the cruel execution of the beautiful Bábí heroine Qurratu'l-'Ayn in 1852.

However great the number of Mazdakites who perished in this massacre (which took place at the end of A.D. 528, or the beginning of 529) may have been, the sect Subsequent history of the Mazdakites can hardly have been exterminated in a day, and there are reasons for believing that a fresh persecution took place soon after Nushírwán's accession to the throne (A.D. 531). After that, even, the sect, though no longer manifest, probably continued to exist in secret, nor is it unlikely that, as is suggested by some Muhammadan writers, its doctrines, like those of the Manichæans, passed over into Muhammadan times, and were reproduced more or less faithfully by some of those strange antinomian sects of later days which will demand our attention in future chapters. This view is most strongly advanced by the celebrated Nizámu'l-Mulk, who, in his Treatise on Government (*Siyásat-náma*) endeavours at great length to show that the Isma'ílís and Assassins towards whom he entertained so violent an antipathy (amply justified in the event by his assassination at their hands on October 14, 1092) were the direct descendants of the Mazdakites.

#### 4 *The Decline and Fall of the House of Sāsán.*

In the long and glorious reign of Nushírwán (A.D. 531-578),

no year, perhaps, was so memorable, or so fraught with consequences of deep and unsuspected importance, as the forty-second

(A D 572-3), called by the Arabs <sup>the</sup> Year of the

<sup>The Year of the</sup> Elephant In this year, on the one hand, culmi

nated a long series of events which led to the annexa

tion by Persia of the rich and ancient kingdom of Yaman, an acquisition which might well arouse the enthusiasm and awaken the plaudits of the Persian imperialists of that epoch, while in it, on the other hand, was born in distant Mecca one whose teaching was destined to overthrow the House of Sasán and the religion of Zoroaster, the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>o</sup> On the night of his birth, according to the legends so dear to pious Muslims, the Palace of the Persian King was shaken by an

earthquake, so that fourteen of its battlements fell

<sup>Prognostication of the fall of the Sasanian Empire.</sup> to the ground, the Sacred Fire, which had burned continuously for a thousand years, was extin

guished, and the Lake of Sawa suddenly dried

up while the chief priest of the Zoroastrians saw in a dream the West of Persia overrun by Arabian camels and horses from across the Tigris. At these portents Nushirwan was greatly troubled, nor was his trouble dispelled by the oracular answer brought back by his messenger 'Abdul Masih, a Christian Arab of the tribe of Ghassan, from his uncle, the aged Satih, who dwelt on the borders of the Syrian desert. This answer, conveyed in the rhyming *rajaz* regarded by the Arabian soothsayers (*kahana*) as the appropriate vehicle of their oracles, was couched in the following strain —

On a camel Abdul Masih hastens toward Satih who to the verge of the Tomb is already come Thee hither doth bring the command of the Sásanian King because the Palace hath quaked and the Fire is slaked and the Chief Priest in his dream hath seen camels fierce and lean and horse troops by them led o'er the Tigris bed through the border marches spread

O Abdul Masih! When reading shall abound and the Man of

*the Staff<sup>1</sup> be found and the hosts shall settle in the Vale of Samdwa,<sup>2</sup> and dried up shall be the Lake of Sáwa, and the Holy Fire of Persia shall fail, no more for Salil shall Syria avail! Yet to the number of the turrets<sup>3</sup> your kings and queens shall reign, and their empire retain, though that which is to come cometh an ain!*"

These tales of portent and presage must, however, be regarded rather as pious after-thoughts than as historical facts. The birth of the Arabian Prophet, like many another momentous event, was announced, we may be sure, by no such blare of celestial trumpets, and did not for a moment occupy the attention even of the men of Mecca, for whom the "Year of the Elephant" afforded ample food for thought and anxiety.

In the early part of the sixth century the political position of the Arabs was as follows. In the west the kingdom of Ghassán and in the east the kingdom of Híra acknowledged more or less the suzerainty of Byzantium and Persia respectively. The bulk of the Arabs of Central Arabia, secure in their deserts and broken up into numerous more or less hostile

Political relations of the Arabs in the sixth century

tribes, fought and sang and robbed and raided much as do the Bedouin of to-day, with little regard for the neighbouring states. In the south the rich and ancient kingdom of Yaman enjoyed, under its own Tubba's or kings, a larger measure of wealth, prosperity, and civilisation. The infamous usurper Lakhí'a, called *Dhh Shaná'n*, met his well-merited doom at the hands of the young prince Dhú Nuwás, who for since the days of

<sup>1</sup> *I e*, the Caliph 'Umar, in whose reign (A.D. 634-644) the conquest of Persia was chiefly effected

<sup>2</sup> A place near Híra, in the neighbourhood of which was fought the fateful battle of Qadisiyya

<sup>3</sup> *I e*, the fourteen turrets or battlements which, in Nushírw ín's dream, fell from the palace. Nushírw ín's fourteen successors are presumably to be reckoned as follows: (1) Hurmázd IV, (2) Khusraw Parwíz, (3) Shírú'é, (4) Ardashír III, (5) Shahrbaráz, (6) Púran-dukh't, (7) Gushnaspdeh, (8) Ázarmí-dukh't, (9) Khusraw, son of Mihr-Gushnasp, (10) Khurrazadh-Khusraw, (11) Pírúz, son of Gushnaspdeh, (12) Farrukhzadh-Khusraw; (13) Hurmázd V, (14) Yazdígird III

Bilqis Queen of Sheba regicide seems to have been regarded in South Arabia as the best title to the Crown—was by acclamation elected king, the last king, as it proved in the event, of the old Himyarite stock )

Now Dhu Nuwas elected to turn Jew, and with the zeal of a proselyte, proceeded to persecute the Christians of Nejrân, whom, on their refusal to embrace Judaism, he slew with the sword, burned and roasted in pits dug for the purpose, and barbarously tortured in other ways To this event allusion is made in sura lxxxv of the Qur'an

Dh Nuwâ d  
th persecut  
f th Chri tians  
f N Jrân.

*“Death upon the People of the Pits,  
of the Burning Fire, when they sat over them, watch  
ing what they did to the believers, against whom they  
had no complaint save that they believed in God, the  
Mighty, the Praiseworthy !”*

That, as stated by Tabarî, 20,000 Christians perished in this persecution (A D 523) is, of course, incredible, the actual number of victims being probably not much more than a hundredth part of this, but the news, brought by one of the fugitives, was horrible enough to stir the wrath of the Abyssinian

Christians, and to induce their ruler, the Nejashi or Negush, to send an army to avenge his co-religionists This army, commanded by Aryat and Abraha, utterly defeated the Yamânites, and Dhu Nuwas, perceiving that all was lost, spurred his horse into the sea, and disappeared for ever from mortal ken To this event the Himyarite poet Dhu Jadan refers in the following verses —

Abyssinian  
co q est f  
Y m n.

*Gently ! Can tears recall the things that are spent and sped ?  
Fret thyself not with weeping for those who are lost and dead !  
After Baynun whereof nor stones nor traces remain  
And after Silhîn shall man ere build such houses again ?*

And again —

*Leave me accursed shrew ! For what can avail thy cries ?*

The names of two ancient castles said to have been built by the Jinn for Queen Bilqis by command of Solomon

*Plague on thee! Peace! In my throat thy scolding the spittle dries!  
To the music of cithers and singers in bygone days 'twas fine  
When we drank our fill and revelled in royallest, ruddiest wine!  
To drain the sparkling wine cup I deem it, indeed, no shame,  
When it brings no act that a comrade and boon-companion can blame;  
For Death is by no man cheated, the grave is the share of each,  
Though protection he seek of the perfumes and potions and drugs of  
the leech!*

*The monk in his cloistered dwelling, which rears its janis as high  
As the nest of the hawk and eagle, in vain would death deny.  
Thou hast heard, for sure, of Ghumddān,<sup>2</sup> the house with the lofty roof,  
Which they built on a mountain-summit, from meaner dwellings aloof;  
Crowned with the joiner's labour, with square-heaven stones for stay,  
Plastered without and within with clean, tough, slippery clay  
With burden of dates half-ripened already the palm-trees seemed  
Ready to break, while the oil-lamps like summer lightning gleamed  
Yet is this once-new Castle a pile of ashes to-day,  
And the lambent flames have eaten its beauty and form away.  
For Abū Nuwās, despairing, hath hastened to meet his death,  
Foretelling their pending troubles to his folk with his latest breath!"*

Aryāt, the Abyssinian conqueror of Yaman, did not, however, long survive to enjoy the fruits of victory, for he was treacherously slain in a duel by his ambitious lieutenant, Abraha, who, however, emerged from the combat with a wound across his face which earned for him the nickname of *al-Ashnam*, "the split-nosed."

Aryāt killed  
by Abraha.

Now it pleased Abraha to build at San'ā, the capital of Yaman, a great and splendid church, whereby he hoped to divert the stream of Arab pilgrims away from the Square Temple of Mecca. But the Arabs murmured at his endeavour, and one of them, a soothsayer of the tribe of Fuqaym, entered the church by stealth and defiled it. Then Abraha was filled with wrath, swore to destroy the Temple of Mecca, and set out to execute his threat with his elephants of war and a vast host of Abyssinians.

Abraha's expedition against  
Mecca.

<sup>2</sup> Another celebrated edifice, built by the architect Sinnimār, who was on the completion of his task slain by his employer lest he should produce some yet more wonderful monument of his skill.

While Abrahā lay encamped at Mughammas, hard by the city of Mecca, he was visited by 'Abdu l Muttalib, the grandfather of the Prophet Muhammad, who was one of the principal men of the Quraysh, that noble tribe to whom was specially entrusted the care of the Sanctuary. And Abrahā, being well pleased with his manners and address, bade him through his interpreter crave a boon. "I desire," replied 'Abdu l Muttalib, "that the King should restore to me two hundred camels which have been taken from me." "Thou speakest to me," answered Abrahā in astonishment, "of two hundred camels which I have taken from thee, yet sayest naught of a Temple which is the Sanctuary of thee and thy fathers, and which I am come to destroy!" 'Abdu l Muttalib's rejoinder is characteristically Arabian. "I am the master of the camels," said he, "but the Temple has its own Master, who will take care of it, and, on Abrahā's remarking, "He cannot protect it against me!" he added, "That remains to be seen, only give me back my camels!"

Having recovered his camels, 'Abdu l Muttalib withdrew with his associates to a mountain top to await the event, but ere he retreated from Mecca he paid a visit to the Ka'ba, and, holding in his hand the great ring knocker on the outer door, exclaimed —

*Lord in Thee alone I trust against them!  
Lord repel them from Thine Holy Land!  
Tis the Temple's foe who fights against Thee  
Save Thy town from his destroying hand!*

Next day Abrahā prepared to carry out his threat, and advanced with his army, at the head of which marched his great elephant Mahmud, against Mecca. But as the elephant advanced, an Arab named Nufayl came up to it, took hold of its ear, and cried, "Kneel down, O Mahmud, and return by the direct way whereby thou camest hither, for thou art on God's holy ground!" Thereat the elephant knelt down, and, notwith-

standing all their blows and stabs, refused to move a step against Mecca, though ready enough to go in any other direction.

Then God sent against the Abyssinians hosts of little birds like swallows *abábil*, as the Qur'án calls them each of which held three little stones or pellets of clay, one in its beak and two in its claws. These they let fall on the Abyssinians, and whosoever was struck by them died, and so the great host was routed. One fugitive, they say, returned to Abyssinia to tell the tale, and when they asked him "What manner of birds were these?" he pointed up at one which still hovered over him. Even as he did so, the bird let fall the stone that it held,<sup>1</sup> and he too was stricken dead.

The *Ababil*  
birds

Such are the events which gave their name to this momentous year, and to which allusion is made in the chapter of the Qur'án entitled the "Súra of the Elephant." "*Hast thou not seen,*" it runs, "*how thy Lord dealt with the people of the Elephant? Did He not cause their plan to miscarry? And made them like chaff consumed?*"

The opinion which now generally prevails amongst European scholars is that the above legend rests on a real basis of fact, and that a sudden and virulent outbreak of small-pox did actually decimate and put to rout the impious invaders. Small wonder that the Arabs saw in this almost miraculous preservation of their Sanctuary the Manifest Power of God, and that the "Year of the Elephant" marked an epoch in the development of their national life.

Historical basis  
of the legend

But Yaman still groaned under the Abyssinian yoke, and Abraha of the split nose was succeeded in turn by his sons Yaksúm<sup>†</sup> and Masiúq, whose hands were heavy on the Himyarites, so that at length Sayf the son of Dhú Yazan went forth as their ambassador to

Sayf b. Dhú  
Yazán's appeal  
to Persia

<sup>†</sup> One of his coins, figured by Ruppell, bears, according to Gutschmid, the legend βασιλεύς Ἰαζωμί, and on the other side the name of his suzerain Γερσέμ.

seek relief from one of the two great empires, the Byzantine and the Persian, which then divided the mastery of that region of the world. Meeting with no encouragement from the former, he induced Mundhir, the Arab King of Hira, to present him at the Persian Court. Nushirwan received him in his audience hall, seated on his gorgeous throne, his head surmounted by, though not supporting, the gigantic barrel like crown, glittering with rubies, emeralds, pearls, and other precious stones, supported by a chain from the roof, which was at once the glory and the oppression of the Sásanian kings.

"O King!" said Sayf ibn Dhu Yazan, when he had prostrated himself before this gorgeous apparition, "the Ravens have taken our land!"

"Which Ravens?" inquired Nushirwan, "those of Abyssinia or those of India?"

"The Abyssinians," continued Sayf, "and now I come to thee that thou mayst help me and drive them away from me; then shall the lordship over my land be thine, for ye are preferred by us to them."

"Thy land," answered the King, "is too remote from ours, and is withal too poor a land, wherein is naught but sheep and camels, for us to desire it. I cannot venture a Persian army in Arabia, nor have I any wish so to do."

So Nushirwan gave him a present of ten thousand dirhams and a robe of honour, and so dismissed him. But the Him-

yarite envoy, as he went forth from the palace, cast the gold in handfuls amongst the retainers, slaves, pages, and handmaidens who stood round, and these greedily scrambled for it. When the King heard this, he recalled the envoy, and asked him how he dared deal thus with the King's gift. "What else should I do with it?" answered he, "the mountains of my land whence I come consist only of gold and silver. And when the King heard this, he swallowed the bait so artfully presented, and

Economical  
Imperialism.

detained the envoy till he should lay the matter before his advisers. Then said one of his counsellors, "O King, in thy prisons are men whom thou hast cast into fetters to put them to death; canst thou not give him these? If they perish, then is thy purpose fulfilled; but if they take the country, then is thy lordship increased."

This ingenious plan for combining Imperial expansion with domestic economy was enthusiastically approved, and an examination of the prisons produced eight hundred condemned felons, who were forthwith placed under the command of a superannuated general named Wahriz, so old that, as the story runs, his eyelids drooped over his eyes, and must needs be bound or held up when he wished to shoot.<sup>\*</sup> The expeditionary force thus constituted, and accompanied by Sayf, was embarked on eight ships, of which two were wrecked, while the remaining six safely reached the coast of Hadramawt, where the little Persian army of six hundred men was largely reinforced by the Yamanite Arabs. The news of this bold invasion soon reached Masrûq, and brought him out at the head of his hosts to give battle. Then Wahriz made a great feast for his followers, and, while they were carousing, burned his ships and destroyed his stores, after which, in a spirited harangue, he pointed out that the choice between death and victory was the only choice open to them, and called on them to play the part of men. They responded (having, indeed, but little option in the matter), and the battle began. Wahriz caused some of those who stood by him to point out to him the Abyssinian king, who was rendered conspicuous by an immense ruby, the size of an egg, which blazed on his forehead. Choosing an auspicious moment, Wahriz shot an arrow at him as he rode on his mule, and the arrow struck fair

Composition of  
the Persian exp-  
ditionary force

The historic  
shot of Wahriz

<sup>\*</sup> Concerning the origin of this curious detail, which occurs again in another connection, see Noldeke's *Sasaniden*, p. 226, n. 1

in the middle of the ruby, splintering it in pieces and transfixing Masruq's forehead

The death of their king was the signal for the rout of the Abyssinians, whom the victorious Persians massacred without mercy, though sparing their Arab and Himyarite allies and Yaman became a Persian province, governed first by its conqueror, Wahriz (and for a part of his lifetime by Sryf), then by his son, grandson, and great grandson, and lastly, in the time of Muhammad, by a Persian named Badhan of another family. Even in early Muhammadan days we hear much of the *Banul Ahrâr*, or "Sons of the Noble," as the Persian settlers in Yaman were called by the Arabs

With the death of Nushirwan (A D 578), which happened shortly after these events, the decline of the Sasanian Empire began. Proud and formidable to outward appearance as was the Persian power against which the warriors of Islam hurled themselves in the following century, it was rotten to the core, honeycombed with intrigues, seething with discontent, and torn asunder by internecine and fratricidal strife. Nushirwan's own son, *Anusha zadh* the Christian, revolted, as has been already mentioned, against him. His successor, Hurmazd the Fourth, provoked by his folly and ingratitude the formidable revolt of Bahram Chubin, which led directly to his estrangement from his son Khusraw Parwiz. The flight of the latter and his two uncles, Bistâm and Bindue, to the Byzantines and his own violent death. Parwiz in turn, after a reign long indeed (A D 590-627), but filled with strife, intrigue and murder, was murdered by his son, Shirue, after a travesty of judicial attainder which did but add senseless insult to unnatural cruelty. After a reign of only a few months, which he inaugurated by the murder of eighteen of his brothers, the parricide sickened and died and a fearful plague which devastated Persia seemed the appropriate sign of Heaven's

wrath against this wicked king. His infant son, Ardashír, a boy seven years old, succeeded him, but was besieged and slain in his capital Ctesiphon by the usurper Shahrbaráz, who in turn was assassinated some forty days later (June 9, A D 630) by three of his body guard. Púrán-dukhít, daughter of Khusraw Parwíz, next ascended the perilous throne, and seemed by her wisdom and good intentions destined to inaugurate a brighter epoch, but, after restoring the wood of the True Cross to the Byzantine Emperor, she too died after a reign of sixteen months. She was succeeded by a distant cousin of her father, who, under the name of Pírúz, reigned less than a month, and was followed by her sister, the beautiful Ázarmí-dukhít. She, to avenge an insult, compassed the death of Farrukh-Hurmízd, the Spíhbadh of Khurásán, and was in turn slain, after a brief reign of six months, by his son Rustam, the Persian general, who four years later (in A D 635) perished in the disastrous defeat of Qádísíyya. Four or five other ephemeral rulers, some of whom were murdered and some deposed, intervened between her and her father's grandson, the ill-fated Yazdigird the Third, who, last of that royal and noble House, perished miserably, a solitary fugitive, at the hands of a wretched churl whose greed had been aroused by the jewels which alone remained to the hunted and ruined king to tell of his rank and riches. When Núshírwán had heard from 'Abdu'l-Masíh the interpretation of his vision he consoled himself with the reflection that fourteen kings of his House should rule after him ere the final catastrophe. The first fourteen kings of the dynasty reigned in all more than two centuries who could suppose that the reigns of the eleven rulers who intervened between Khusraw Parwíz and Yazdigird the Third would not altogether amount to more than five years ?<sup>1</sup>

And all this time the enemy was thundering at the gates of

<sup>1</sup> Shírú'e succeeded to the throne on February 25, A D 628, Yazdigird III, the last king of the House of Sasan, at the end of A D 632 or the beginning of A D 633.

the doomed empire with ever increasing insistence Three presages of disaster, in particular, are enumerated by Tabarī,<sup>1</sup> the Muslim historian, as Divine warnings to Khusraw Parwiz of the consequences which his rejection of the message of the Arabian Prophet would entail The letter in which this message was embodied is said to have been couched in the following words —<sup>2</sup>

*In the Name of God the Merciful the Compassionate From Muhammad the Apostle of God to Khusraw son of Hurmazd But to proceed Verily I extol unto thee God beside whom there is no other God He it is who guarded me when I was an orphan and made me rich when I was destitute and guided me when I was straying in error Only he who is bereft of understanding and over whom calamity triumphs rejects the message which I am sent to announce O Khusraw! Submit and thou shalt be safe or else prepare to wage with God and with His apostle a war which shall not find them helpless! Farewell!*

Khusraw Parwiz, according to one story, tore the letter in pieces, whereupon the Muslim envoy exclaimed, "Thus O impious King, shall God rend asunder thine empire and scatter thy hosts!" In another account, the Persian King is said to have written to Badhan, satrap of Yaman (see p 181 *supra*) bidding him march on Medina, seize the Prophet Muhammad, and bring him captive to Ctesiphon<sup>3</sup>

The portents described as warning Khusraw Parwiz of the swiftly approaching doom of the Persian Empire fall into three categories—visions, signs, and actual historical events

The *visions* include the apparition to Khusraw Parwiz of an angel, who breaks a staff symbolising the Persian power, and the writing on the wall, whereof the purport is thus given in the *Nihāyatul Irab* —

See Noldeke's *Sasaniden* pp 303-345

The text is taken from the rare *Nihāyatul Irab* Cambridge MS See the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for April 1900 p 251

<sup>3</sup> See the article mentioned in the last note p 251

*"O weak man ! Verily God hath sent unto His people an Apostle, and hath revealed unto him a Scripture, therefore submit and believe, and He will vouchsafe to thee the good of this world and the next But if thou wilt not do this, thou shalt shortly perish, and thy kingdom shall perish, and thy power shall depart from thee !"*

The *signs* include the repeated bursting of a dam placed by order of the King in the "blind" Tīgīs (a branch of that river which flowed by Basra) ; the collapse of the vaulted arch from which depended the mighty barrel-like crown over his throne ; and the play of lightnings reaching towards the east over Hījáz.

The *historical event* was the Battle of Dhú Qár (fought between A.D 604 and 610), an engagement which, comparatively insignificant in itself, yet served to teach the Arabs that, for all their higher civilisation, their wealth, and their renown, the Persians were not invincible "This," said the Prophet, when he heard of it, "is the first day whereon the Arabs have obtained satisfaction from the Persians, through me have they obtained help !"

(2) Signs

(3) The Battle of  
Dhu Qar



a new religion In opposition to the dualism of the Persians and a degenerate Christianity, it announced a pure monotheism which was accepted by millions of men, and which, even in our own time, constitutes the religion of a tenth part of the human race"

We have seen that, as at the Battle of Dhú Qár, signs of the immense vitality and potential strength of the Arabs hitherto regarded by their neighbours as a "negligible quantity" were not altogether wanting even before the triumph of Islám; yet it was undoubtedly to Islám, that simple yet majestic creed of which no unprejudiced student can ignore the grandeur, that they owed the splendid part which they were destined to play in the history of civilisation. In judging of the Arabian Prophet, Western critics are too often inclined to ignore the condition from which he raised his country, and to forget that many institutions, such as slavery and polygamy, which they condemn were not introduced but only tolerated by Islám. The early Muslims were very sensible of the immense amelioration in their life effected by Muhammad's teaching. What this amelioration was is well shown in the following passage from the oldest extant biography of the Prophet, that of Ibn Hishám († A.H. 213=A.D. 828-9).<sup>1</sup>

"How the Negúsh summoned the *Muhájirín*<sup>2</sup> before him, and questioned them concerning their Religion, and their answer concerning this

"Then he (*i.e.*, the Negúsh or ruler of Abyssinia) sent unto the followers of the Apostle of God and summoned them. So when his messenger came unto them, they gathered together, and said one to another, 'What will ye say to the man when ye come before him?' 'By Alláh!' they replied, 'we will declare what we know, and what our Apostle hath enjoined on us, come what may!' So when they came to the Negúsh, he had convened his bishops, who had spread out their books round about him, and he inquired

Ibn Hisham's  
account of the  
Muslim exiles  
before the  
Negush of  
Abyssinia.

<sup>1</sup> Edited by Wustenfeld, 1859, German translation by Weil, Stuttgart, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> *Muhájirín* ("Fugitives") is the name given to the disciples of Muhammad who were compelled by persecution to flee from Mecca and seek a refuge in Abyssinia and elsewhere.

of them saying What is this religion by reason of which ye have separated from your people yet enter not withal into my religion nor into the religion of any other of these churches?

Then answered him Jafar the son of Abu Tâlib (may God's approval rest upon him!) saying O king! We were a barbarous folk worshipping idols eating carrion committing shameful deeds violating the ties of consanguinity and evilly entreating our neighbours the strong amongst us consuming the weak and thus we continued until God sent unto us an Apostle from our midst whose pedigree and integrity and faithfulness and purity of life we knew to summon us to God that we should declare His unity and worship Him and put away the stones and idols which we and our fathers used to worship in His stead and he bade us be truthful in speech and faithful in the fulfilment of our trusts and observing of the ties of consanguinity and the duties of neighbours and to refrain from forbidden things and from blood and he forbade us from immoral acts and deceitful words and from consuming the property of orphans and from slandering virtuous women and he commanded us to worship God and to associate naught else with Him and to pray and give alms and fast Then when he had enumerated unto him the commandments of Islâm he continued So we accepted him as true and believed in him and followed him in that which he brought from God worshipping God alone and associating naught else with Him and holding unlawful that which he prohibited to us and lawful that which he sanctioned unto us Then our people molested us and persecuted us and strove to seduce us from our faith that they might bring us back from the worship of God to the worship of idols and induce us to hold lawful the evil practices which we had formerly held lawful So they strove to compel us and oppressed us and constrained us, and strove to come between us and our religion Wherefore we came forth unto thy land choosing thee over all beside thee and eagerly desirous of thy protection And now O king we pray that we may not be oppressed before thee!

Then said the Negush to him Hast with thee aught of that which thy Prophet received from God? Yea said Jafar Then read it to me said the Negush So he read unto him the opening words of the *sura* entitled *A H I Ş* and the Negush wept so that

Chap. xiv of the *Qurân* better known as the *Suratu Maryam* or Chapter of Mary Concerning the mysterious letters prefixed to this and twenty-eight other *Suras* of the *Qurân* see Sales *Preliminary Discourses* § iii

his beard was wet with his tears, and his bishops wept with him, until their books were wet with their tears, when they heard what he read unto them. Then said the Negúsh to them, 'Verily this and that which Moses brought emanate from one Lamp Go, for by Alláh I will not suffer them to get at you, nor even contemplate this''

To enter into a discussion as to the character and motives of the Prophet Muhammad would lead us too far afield, more especially as these matters, together with his history, the development of his doctrines, and the progress slow at first, but afterwards lightning-like in its rapidity of his religion, have been ably and adequately discussed in the monographs of Sale, Sprenger, Muir, Krehl, Noldeke, Boswell Smith, and Sayyid Amír 'Alí. Of these works the last, written from the point of view of a modern broad-minded and well-read Muslim, conversant alike with Eastern and Western views, is especially deserving of study by those who desire to understand the strong hold which Islám and its Prophet still have even on those Muslims who are most imbued with European culture and learning. The great strength of Islám lies in its simplicity, its adaptibility, its high yet perfectly attainable ethical standard. The Christian ethical standard is, we must admit, higher, but almost beyond the reach of the individual, and quite beyond the reach of the State. The ideal Muslim state is conceivable and was actually realised, or very nearly so, by Muhammad's immediate successors, the four "Orthodox Caliphs," whose rule the historian al-Fakhri thus describes

"Know that this was a state not after the fashion of the states of this world, but rather resembling prophetic dispensations and the conditions of the world to come. And the truth concerning it is that its fashion was after the fashion of the Prophets, and its conduct after the model of the Saints, while its victories were as those of mighty Kings. Now as for its fashion, this was hardship in life and simplicity in food and raiment, one of them (*i.e.*, the early Caliphs) would walk through the streets on foot, wearing but a tattered shirt reaching half-way

Citation from  
al-Fakhri

down his leg and sandals on his feet and carrying in his hand a whip wherewith he inflicted punishment on such as deserved it And their food was of the humblest of their poor the Commander of the Faithful (on whom be peace!) spoke of honey and fine bread as typical of luxury for he said in one of his speeches If I wished I could have the finest of this honey and the softest of this barley bread

Know further that they were not abstinent in respect to their food and raiment from poverty or inability to procure the most sumptuous apparel or the sweetest meats but they used to do this in order to put themselves on an equality with the poorest of their subjects and to wean the flesh from its lusts and to discipline it till it should accustom itself to its highest potentialities else was each one of them endowed with ample wealth and palm groves and gardens and other like possessions But most of their expenditure was in charitable uses and offerings the Commander of the Faithful Ali (on whom be peace!) had from his properties an abundant revenue all of which he spent on the poor and needy while he and his family contented themselves with coarse cotton garments and a loaf of barley bread

As for their victories and their battles verily their cavalry reached Africa and the uttermost parts of Khurasan and crossed the Oxus

P
 Muhammad's task was no easy one, and for the first eight or ten years of his mission, in fact till his flight (*hijra*) from Mecca to Madīna in A D 622—the epoch whence /  
Char t f th  
Arabs. to this day his followers date—must have appeared  
 hopeless save to such as were possessed by a faith which neither recognised impossibility nor admitted despair It was not only that the Arabs, especially the Bedouin of the desert, did not wish to abandon their old gods and their ancient customs they definitely disliked the pious ideals of Islam, disbelieved in its threats and promises of pains and pleasures beyond the grave, and intensely resented the discipline to which it would subject them The genuine Arab of the desert is and remains at heart a sceptic and a materialist his hard, clear, keen, but somewhat narrow intelligence, ever alert in its own domain, was neither curious nor credulous in

respect to immaterial and supra-sensual things, his egotistical and self-reliant nature found no place and felt no need for a God who, if powerful to protect, was exacting of service and self-denial. For the rest, *Allâh ta'âlâ*, the Supreme God preached by Muhammad, was no new discovery of Islâm, and if He received from the old Pagan Arabs less attention and poorer offerings than the minor deities, it was because the latter, being in a sense the property of the tribe, might fairly be expected to concern themselves more diligently about its affairs. Yet even to them scant reverence was paid, unless matters went as their worshippers desired. "À la moindre occasion," says Dozy, "on se fâchait contre les dieux, on leur disait comme il faut leurs vérités et on les outrageait." Oracles which failed to give the desired reply were insulted; idols which did not accept the sacrifices offered to them in a becoming manner were abused and pelted with stones, gods were deposed and improvised on the smallest provocation. Yet all this did not dispose the Arabs to accept a new and exacting religion. The old gods, if ineffectual, were at least intimate and inoffensive, and if they gave little, they expected little in return. Islâm, moreover, was uncompromising in its attitude towards them; they and their followers even those who lived before the Light came were in hell-fire, and no favourite fetish was suffered to endure for a moment by the iconoclastic zeal of the new faith. More than this, as Dr Goldziher has well shown in the first chapter of his luminous and erudite *Muhammedanische Studien*, wherein, under the title "Dîn and Muruwwa," he contrasts the ideals of the *Jâhiliyya*, or pagan times, with those of Islâm, these ideals were in many respects incompatible, and even diametrically opposed. Personal courage, unstinted generosity, lavish hospitality, unswerving loyalty to kinsmen, ruthlessness in avenging any wrong or insult offered to one's self or one's relations or tribesmen—these were the cardinal virtues of the old pagan Arab, while resignation, patience, subordination of personal

and tribal interests to the demands of a common faith, unworldliness, avoidance of ostentation and boastfulness, and many other things enjoined by Islam were merely calculated to arouse his derision and contempt

To make the contrast clearer, let us compare the spirit revealed by the two following passages, of which the first is taken (v 178) from the second *sūra* of the Qur'an (entitled "the Cow"), while the second is a poem ascribed to the old robber minstrel Taabbata Sharr, a name suggestive enough, for it signifies "he took an armful of wickedness"

The first runs as follows —

Rig iteousness is not that ye turn your faces to the East and to the West but righteousness is this whosoever believeth in God and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book and the Prophets and whoso for the love of God giveth of his wealth unto his kindred and unto orphans and the poor and the traveller and to those who crave an alms and for the release of the captives and whoso observeth prayer and giveth in charity and those who when they have covenanted fulfil their covenant and who are patient in adversity and hardship and in times of violence These are the righteous and they that fear the Lord !

The second is sometimes considered to be a forgery made by that clever but not very scrupulous scholar Khalaf al Ahmar, but the late Professor Robertson Smith held, as it seems to me with good reason, that it breathes throughout so essentially pagan a spirit that it can scarcely be regarded as a fabrication, or, if it be such, it is so artfully devised as to sum up, as it were, the whole spirit of the old pagan Arabs. The poem celebrates

Cited in Sir William Muir's excellent little volume entitled *Extracts from the Coran* (London 1880)

The text of this poem will be found at pp 187-188 of Wright's *Arabic Reading Book* (London 1870) A spirited German translation in verse is included in an article on the poet by Baur in vol x (for 1856 pp 74-109) of the *Zeitschrift d Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*

the vengeance exacted by the singer from the tribe of Hudhayl for the murder of his uncle, with a description of whose virtues it opens -

*" Verily in the ravine below Sal'a lies a murdered man whose blood  
is not suffered to rest unavenged  
He left and bequeathed the burden [of vengeance] to me, and  
blithely did I take up the burden for him  
And in quest of the blood-revenge, on my part, is a sister's son, a  
swordsman whose harness is not loosened,  
A stealthy tracker who sweats venom, tracking like the rustling  
viper, spitting poison*

*Grievous and crushing were the tidings that reached us, waving  
great till the greatest seemed small beside them !  
Fate hath robbed us (and she was ever faithless) of one hard of  
approach whose client was never abased !  
A sun-beam in the winter-weather, until, when the Dog-star blazed,  
he was a coolness and a shadow ;  
Lean of the sides, but not from want, open-handed, wise and  
disdainful ,  
Fourneying with prudence, so that, when he halted, prudence  
halted where he halted ,  
The rushing rain of the rain-cloud when he would confer benefits,  
and, when he sprang to the fray, a conquering lion ,  
Long-bearded in the tribe, swarthy, ample-shirted , and, when on  
the war-path, a slim hyæna-wolf  
And he had two tastes, honey and colocynth, of which two tastes  
every one had tasted  
He would ride through the 'Terror' [i.e., the Desert] alone, none  
bearing him company save his notched sword-blade of Yemen.*

*A band of brave fellows travelling through the noon-day glare and  
then on through the night, until, when the morning mists were  
dispelled, they alighted ,  
Each keen warrior girt with a keen blade, flashing like the light-  
ning when unsheathed  
So we exacted from them the blood-revenge, and of the two  
factions there escaped not save the fewest  
They were sipping breaths of sleep, and when they dozed I smote  
them with consternation and they were scattered*

*And if Hudhayl broke his sword blade many a sword blade of  
Hudhayl did he break !*

*And many a time did he make them kneel down in a jagged  
kneeling place whereon the feet were torn !*

*And many a time did he surprise them at morning in their shelter  
whereby there was plundering and looting when the killing  
was done !*

*Hudhayl hath been roasted by me a gallant warrior who wearieth  
not of evil till they weary*

*Who giveth his spear its first drink so that when it hath drunk its  
first draught it hath thereafter its second draught*

*Wine hath become lawful to me when it was unlawful and by  
what labour till it scarce become lawful !*

*Give me to drink then O Sa'ad son of Amr for verily my body  
hath waxed lean since my uncle's death !*

*The hyæna laughs over the slain of Hudhayl and thou mayst see  
the wolf baring his gleaming teeth upon them*

*And the birds of prey awake gorged in the morning trampling  
upon them unable to fly !*

“Honour and revenge, in short, as Muir well says, were the key notes of the pagan Arabs ideal *murawwa* (“manliness” or “virtue”) to be free, brave, generous to return good for good and evil for evil with liberal measure to hold equally dear wine, women, and war to love life and not fear death to be independent, self reliant, boastful, and predatory above all, to stand by one's kinsmen, right or wrong, and to hold the blood tie above all other obligations, such were the ideals of the old pagan Arabs, as they are still of the Bedouin, who are Muslims in little else than the name Alike typical and touching was the attitude of Muhammad's uncle Abu Talib towards his nephew “O my nephew, he said, in reply to the Prophet's earnest attempts to convert him to Islam, “I cannot forsake the faith of my fathers and what they held, but, by Allah! naught shall be suffered to befall thee whereby thou mayst be vexed so long as I remain alive !”

Disbelieving in the Prophet's claims, or, if believing them, preferring hell-fire in the company of his ancestors to the paradise offered to him as the reward of belief, he yet would not suffer his nephew to be molested at the hands of strangers.

The period extending from the *hijra* or Flight of the Prophet (June, A.D. 622) to the death of 'Umar, the second of the Four Orthodox Caliphs (*al-Khulafā'u 'r-Rāshidūn*), in A.D. 644, may be regarded as the golden age of pious, as opposed to philosophical, Islām, for though the ideal theocracy depicted by al-Fakhrī in the passage already cited endured till the death of 'Alī (A.D. 661), who is regarded by a large section of the Muslim world as the noblest, best, and worthiest of the Prophet's successors, discord, schism, murder, civil war, and internecine feuds entered in during the disastrous rule of the third Caliph, 'Uthmān. Muḥammad lived to see all Arabia apparently submissive to his doctrine, but no sooner was he dead than a widespread revolt against Islām broke out amongst the Arab tribes, and not till this was quenched in blood, and the "renegades" either slain or reduced to obedience, could Abū Bakr seriously turn his attention to the conquest and conversion of non-Arabian lands. Of these Persia alone concerns us, and once more we may with advantage turn to that graphic and picturesque historian al-Fakhrī, who, after detailing the signs and warnings which caused Núshīrwān and Khusraw Parwīz such disquietude, and remarking that "the like of these ominous portents continually succeeded each other until the end of the matter," continues as follows .

"And verily when Rustam went forth to do battle with Sa'd the son of Abū Waqqas he saw in his dream as it were an Angel who descended from heaven, and gathered up the bows of the Persians, and set a seal upon them, and ascended with them into heaven. Then there was added thereunto what they constantly witnessed in respect to the resolute speech of the Arabs, and their confidence in themselves;

Al-Fakhrī's  
account of the  
Conquest of  
Persia

and their extreme patience under hardships and thereafter the dissentient voices which arose amongst themselves towards the end of the matter after the death of Shahriyar and the accession of Yazdigird to the royal throne he being then but a young lad feeble in council and lastly the supreme catastrophe which was the veering of the wind against them during the Battle of Qadisiyya so that it blinded them with dust and encompassed them in a universal destruction There was Rustam slain and their host put to rout look then at these omens and know that God hath a purpose which He fulfilleth

*Account of the equipment of the army against Iraq and the wresting from the Persians of their empire*

The frontiers of Persia were the most formidable of frontiers to the Arabs and those which inspired in their minds the greatest respect and fear so that they were loath to attack them but rather avoided them out of respect for the state of the Persian kings and because of what was generally believed as to their power to subdue other nations And thus it continued until the latter days of Abu Bakr when there rose up a man of the Companions named al Muthanna son of Haritha who incited the people to give battle to the Persians making light of the matter and inspiring them with courage therein So a number of them responded to his appeal and men remembered what the Apostle of God had promised them in respect to the taking possession of the treasures of the Persian king But naught was effected in the matter during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr

But during the time of Umar ibnu l Khattab al Muthanna ibn Haritha wrote to him informing him of the troubled state of Persian affairs and of the accession of Yazdigird the son of Shahriyar to the throne and of his youth for he was but twenty one years of age at the time of his accession

Then the eagerness of the Arabs to attack Persia was increased and Umar went forth with the army outside Madina the people knowing not whither he would go and no man daring to question him concerning aught until at length one inquired of him once as to the time of their departure but got nothing from his question save a rebuke

Now it was their habit when any matter troubled them and they must needs get information concerning it to seek aid from Uthman ibn Affan or Abdur Rahman ibn Awf and when the matter was very urgent to them they added unto these al Abbas So Uthman said to Umar O Commander of the Faithful what tidings have

reached thee, and what dost thou intend?' Then 'Umar called the people to public prayer, and they assembled round him, and he announced the news to them, and exhorted them, and urged them to attack the Persians, making light of the enterprise, and they all consented willingly. Then they asked him to go with them in person, and he answered, 'I will do so unless a better plan than this should appear.' Then he sent for those who were wisest in council and most eminent among the Companions and most prudent, and summoned them before him, and sought counsel of them, and they advised that he should remain and should send one of the chief men of the Companions, remaining behind himself to strengthen him with support. Then, should they be victorious, the end would be attained, while if the man perished, he would send another.

"So when they had agreed to this plan, 'Umar ascended the pulpit, for it was their custom, when they wished to address the people collectively, that one of them should ascend the pulpit and harangue them on that subject whereon he desired to speak. So when 'Umar had mounted the pulpit he said, 'O people, verily I was resolved to march forth with you, but the wise and prudent amongst you have turned me from this plan, suggesting that I should abide here and send one of the Companions to undertake the conduct of the war.' Then he asked their advice as to whom he should send, and at this juncture a letter was handed to him from Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, who was absent on some employ, and they recommended him to 'Umar, saying, 'He is a very lion in attack.' And this proposal met with 'Umar's approval, and he summoned Sa'd, and conferred on him the chief command in 'Irâq, and entrusted unto him the army.

"So Sa'd marched forth with the people, and 'Umar accompanied them for some parasangs, then he exhorted them and incited them to the holy war, and bade them farewell, and returned unto Madîna. But Sa'd, continuing his march, shifted his line of advance into the desert which lies between the Hîjâz and Kûfa, seeking intelligence, and receiving constant messages and letters from 'Umar, who kept advising him with plan after plan and strengthening him with successive reinforcements, until he finally decided to march on Qâdisiyya, which was the gate of the Persian Empire.

Now when Sa'd halted at Qâdisiyya, he and those who were with him were in need of provisions, so he sent out some of his men, commanding them to bring in some sheep and cattle. The people of Sawâd feared their advance, but they found a man and questioned him about sheep and cattle. But he replied, 'I have no knowledge concerning this,' and behold, he was himself a herdsman who had

concealed his beasts in a place of security thereabouts. Then as they relate a bull among them cried out: 'The herdsman lies! Lo here we are in this enclosure!' So they entered in and drove out therefrom a number of cattle and brought them to Sāḍ. And they augured well from this incident, accounting it a sign of help from God Almighty. For even though the bull did not speak actual words to give the lie to the herdsman, none the less did its lowing at this juncture, whereby they were guided to the cattle when they were so grievously in need of them, clearly give the lie to the herdsman. And this was one of those remarkable coincidences which presaged victory and empire and wherefrom they were justified in auguring well.

Now when the news of Sāḍ's advance with his army reached the Persians, they despatched against him Rustam at the head of thirty thousand warriors, the Arab army consisting of only some seven or eight thousand men, though afterward they were reinforced by others. And when the two armies met, the Persians were laughing at the spears of the Arabs, which they compared to spindles, *a propos* of which I may relate an anecdote of a similar character, which there is no harm in introducing here. Ṭalaku d Dīn Muhammad, the son of Aydamir, related to me as follows: 'I was in the army of the lesser Dīwādūr when he marched forth to meet the Tatars<sup>3</sup> on the western side of the City of Peace [Baghdād] on the occasion of that most grievous catastrophe which befell it in the year A.H. 656 [= A.D. 1258]. We met at Nahr Bashir, one of the tributaries of the Little Tigris, and from our side would go forth to challenge an adversary, a horseman mounted on an Arab horse and wholly clad in mail, as though he and his horse were a mountain in solidity. Then there would come out to meet him from the Mongols a horseman mounted on a horse like unto an ass, and holding in his hand a spear like unto a spindle, unclad and unarmed, so that all

*Cf.* al-Baladhurī (ed. de Goeje, pp. 259-60) where one who fought on the Persian side at Qadisiyya relates how they derided the Arab lances, calling them *duk*, which is the Persian for a spindle.

A Persian title meaning 'keeper of the inkstand' (*dawūd* or *dawūdī*) or as it may be paraphrased, 'keeper of the seals'. Al-Fakhrī wrote his charming history at the beginning of the fourteenth century of our era, at a time when the events of the Mongol invasion were still fresh in men's minds.

<sup>3</sup> So the Mongols are generally called by the Arab historians. The European spelling 'Tartar' arose from a desire to establish an etymological connection between this formidable people and the infernal regions of Tartarus.

who beheld him laughed at him Yet ere the day was done the victory was theirs, and they scattered us in a dire defeat which was the key of disaster, so that then there happened what happened in this matter'

"Then ambassadors passed between Rustam and Sa'd, and the Arab of the desert would come to Rustam's door as he sat on a throne of gold, supported by gold-embroidered cushions in a room carpeted with gold-embroidered carpets, the Persians wearing crowns and making display of their ornaments, and the elephants of war standing on the outskirts of the assembly So the Arab would approach with his spear in his hand, girt with his sword and carrying his bow across his shoulders, and would tie up his horse near to Rustam's throne Then the Persians would cry out at him and endeavour to prevent him, but Rustam would stay them, and the Arab would approach him, walking towards him leaning on his spear, pressing therewith on the carpet and cushions and tearing them with its spike, while the Persians looked on And when the Arab came unto Rustam he would answer him back, and Rustam continually heard from them wise words and replies which astonished and affrighted him Thus, for instance, Sa'd used to send a different ambassador each time, and Rustam inquired of one so sent, 'Why do they not send to us him who was with us yesterday?' 'Because,' answered the other, 'our Amír deals equitably with us both in woe and weal' Another day he asked, 'What is this spindle in thy hand?' meaning his lance 'The smallness of a burning coal,' replied the other, 'is no hurt to it' To another he said on another occasion, 'What ails your sword that I see it so worn?' 'Worn of sheath, keen of blade,' retorted the Arab So these things and the like which Rustam saw alarmed him, and he said to his retainers, 'Behold, the pretensions of these people are either true or false If they be false, then a people who guard their secrets thus carefully, differing in naught, and agreed with such accord in the concealment of their secret that none discloseth it, is assuredly a people of great strength and power But if they be true, then can none withstand them' Then they cried out round him, saying, 'We conjure thee by God not to abandon aught which thou holdest by reason of anything which thou hast seen on the part of these dogs' Rather be firm in thy resolve to do battle with them' Then said Rustam, 'This is my view which I tell you, but I am with you in whatsoever ye desire'

"Then they fought for several days, on the last of which happened the veering of the wind against the Persians, so that the dust blinded them, and Rustam was slain, and his army was routed, and their

possessions were plundered and the Persians stricken with panic sought the fords of the Tigris that they might pass to the eastern shore. But Sad pursued them and crossed the fords and inflicted on them another great slaughter at Juhul and plundered their possessions and took captive a daughter of the Persian king's.

Then Sad wrote to Umar to inform him of the victory. And during these days Umar was anxiously on the watch for tidings of the army so that every day he used to go forth outside Madain on foot seeking for news that perchance one might arrive and inform him of what had happened to them. So when he who brought the good tidings from Sad arrived Umar saw him and called to him.

Whence comest thou? From Irîq answered he. What of Sad and the army? inquired Umar. Said the other: God hath rendered them victorious over all this. And Umar was walking by the side of the man as he rode on his camel not knowing that this was Umar. But when the people gathered round him saluting him as Commander of the Faithful the Arab recognised him and said: Why didst thou not tell me (may God be merciful to thee) that thou wert the Commander of the Faithful? O my brother replied Umar thou hast done naught amiss. Then Umar wrote to Sad: Stay where thou art pursue them not but be satisfied with this and make for the Muslims a place of refuge and a city wherein they may dwell and set not a river betwixt me and them. So Sad made for them Kufa and traced out therein the plan of the Mosque while the people marked out their dwellings and he made it the capital of the province. And thus he obtained control over al Madain (Ctesiphon) and got possession of its treasures and stores.

*Mention of some quaint incidents which happened at this time*

Amongst these was that an Arab got possession of a bag filled with camphor and brought it to his companions who supposing it to be salt put it in the food which they were cooking and found it lacking in savour not knowing what it was. Then one who knew what it was saw it and bought it from them for a ragged shirt worth a couple of *dirhams*.

And amongst these was that an Arab of the desert got possession of a great ruby worth a large sum of money and knew not its value. And one who knew its value saw it and bought it from him for a thousand *dirhams*. Then afterwards the Arab discovered its value

See pp. 130 *et seqq.* *supra*

See n. 1 on p. 132 *supra*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. al Baladhuri p. 264

and his comrades reproached him, saying, 'Why didst thou not ask more for it?' He answered, 'If I had known of any number greater than a thousand, I would have demanded it'¹

"And amongst these was that one of the Arabs was holding in his hand red gold and crying, 'Who will take the yellow and give me the white?' supposing that silver was better than gold

*"The ultimate fate of Yazdigrud*

"Then Yazdigrud fled to Khuiásán, and his power was ever waning until he was slain there in the year 31 of the Flight [=A.D. 651-2], and he was the last of the Persian kings"

I have translated this long passage from al-Fakhrí because, in comparatively few words and in a graphic and forcible way, it details the most salient features of the Arab conquest of Persia, though it is summary and sketchy, for the struggle was neither begun nor ended with the fatal battle of Qádisiyya. Early in the war the Muslims sustained a severe defeat at Qussu'n-Nátif at the hands of Mardánsháh and four thousand Persians (November, A.D. 634), nor did the battle of Naháwand, which happened seven years later than that of Qádisiyya, put an end to the resistance of the Persians, who continued to defend themselves in individual localities with a stubbornness which reached its maximum in the province of Páís, the cradle and centre of Persian greatness. In Tabaristán, protected by forests and fens, and separated by a wall of mountains from the great central plateau of Persia, the *Ispahbads*, or military governors of the Sásánian kings, maintained an independent rule until about A.D. 760.

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More difficult to trace than the territorial conquest of the Sásánian dominions is the gradual victory of the religion of Muhammad over that of Zoroaster. It is often supposed that the choice offered by the warriors of Islám was between the Qur'án and the sword. This, however, is not the fact, for Magians, as well as Christians and Jews, were permitted to

¹ A similar anecdote occurs in al-Baládhuri's *Kitabu'l-Futuh* (ed. de Goeje, p. 244)

return their religion, being merely compelled to pay a *jizya* or poll tax a perfectly just arrangement, inasmuch as non Muslim subjects of the Caliphs were necessarily exempt both from military service and from the alms (*Sadaqât*) obligatory on the Prophet's followers. Thus in al Balâdhuri's History of the Muslim Conquests (*Kitâbu futuḥi'l buldan*)<sup>1</sup> we read (p 69) that when Yemen submitted to the Prophet, he sent agents to instruct them in the laws and observances of Islam and to collect the alms of such as adopted it and the poll tax from such as continued in the Christian, Jewish, or Magian religions. Similarly in the case of 'Umman he ordered Abu Zayd to "take alms from the Muslims and the poll tax from the Magians (p 77). In Bahrayn the Persian *marzuban* and some of his fellow countrymen embraced Islam, but others continued in the faith of Zoroaster, paying a poll tax of one *dinâr* for every adult person. "The Magians and Jews, we read (p 79), "were averse to Islam, and preferred to pay the poll tax and the hypocrites amongst the Arabs said, 'Muham mad pretended that the poll tax should be accepted only from the People of the Book, and now he hath accepted it from the Magians of Hajar, who are not of the People of the Book whereupon was revealed the verse, '*O ye who believe! look to yourselves he who errs can do you no hurt when ye are guided unto God is your return altogether and He will make plain unto you that which ye knew not*'<sup>2</sup> The treaty concluded by Habib b Maslama with the people of Dabîl in Armenia ran as follows 'In the Name of God the Merciful the Clement This is a letter from Habib b Maslama to the people of Dabîl, Christians, Magians, and Jews, such of them as are present and such of them as are absent. Verily I guarantee the safety of your lives, properties, churches, temples and city walls, ye are

Al Balâdhuri died in A H 79 (A D 89). His work has been edited by de Goeje (Leyden 1866).

Quran v 104. Concerning the acceptance of the poll tax from Zoroastrians as well as from Jews and Christians cf A von Kremer's *Culturgeschichte d Orients* vol 1 p 59.

secure, and it is incumbent upon us faithfully to observe this treaty so long as ye observe it and pay the poll-tax and the land-tax. God is witness, and He sufficeth as a witness." The Caliph 'Umar, as would appear from a passage in al-Baládhurí (p. 267), had some doubts as to how he ought to deal with the conquered Magians, but 'Abdu'l-Rahmán b. 'Awf sprang to his feet and cried, "I bear witness of the Apostle of God that he said, 'Deal with them as ye deal with the People of the Book!'"

Towns which resisted the Muslims, especially such as, having first submitted, afterwards revolted, did not, of course, escape so easily, and, more particularly in the latter case, the adult males, or at any rate those found in arms, were generally put to the sword, and the women and children taken captive. Still it does not appear that the Zoroastrians as such were subjected to any severe persecution, or that the conversion of Persia to Islám was mainly effected by force. This has been very well shown by Mr. T. W. Arnold, professor at the College of Aligarh, in chap. vii of his excellent work *The Preaching of Islám* (London, 1896, pp. 177-184); he points out that the intolerance of the Zoroastrian priests, not only towards those of other religions, but towards nonconformist Persian sects, Manichæan, Mazdakite, Gnostic and the like, had made them widely and deeply disliked, so that in many Persian subjects "persecution had stirred up feelings of bitter hatred against the established religion and the dynasty that supported its oppressions, and so caused the Arab Conquest to appear in the light of a deliverance." Moreover, as he further points out, the simplicity and elasticity of Islám, as well as the numerous eschatological ideas which it had borrowed from Zoroastrianism, and the relief which it gave from the irksome disabilities and elaborate purifications imposed by that religion, commended it to many, and it is quite certain that the bulk of conversions were voluntary and spontaneous. After the defeat of the Persians at Qádisiyya, for example, some four thousand

soldiers from Daylam (near the Caspian Sea) decided, after consultation, to embrace Islām and join the Arabs, whom they aided in the conquest of Jalulī, after which they settled in Kufa with the Muslims<sup>1</sup> and other wholesale and voluntary conversions were numerous. Indeed the influx of Persian converts and captives into Arabia caused 'Umar some anxiety, so that, as the historian Dinawari informs us (p. 136), he exclaimed, "O God! I take refuge with Thee from the children of these captives of Jalulī!" Nor, in the event, did his anxiety prove baseless and he himself was struck down by the dagger of one of these Persian captives, named by the Arabs Abu Lulu<sup>a</sup>—a fact which even at the present day is recalled with satisfaction by the more fanatical Persian Shi'ites, who, at least till very lately, used to celebrate the anniversary of 'Umar's death (called *'Umar kushān*) much as

▷ Guy Fawkes day is celebrated in England

The earliest Persian convert, Salmān, one of the most revered "Companions of the Prophet, whom the Syrian sect of the Nusayris include in their mystical Trinity denoted by the letters 'A, M, S' ('Alī "the Idea, Muhammad "the Name, Salmān "the Gate"), embraced Islām before its militant days, and, by his skill in military engineering, rendered material service to the Prophet in the defence of Madīna. His history, given at considerable length by Ibn Hishām (pp. 136–143), is very interesting and that eager curiosity in religious matters which led him in his youth to frequent the Christian churches of Isfahān, to flee from his luxurious home and indulgent father, and to abandon the Magian faith in which he was born, first for Christianity and later for Islām, is

Baladhuri p. 80. V. von Kremer's *Culturgeschichte* vol. i p. 67.

See the confessions of a Nusayri renegade entitled *al-Bikrītūs Sulaymān* 337 published at Beyrout without date and an English translation of the same by E. Salisbury in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* for 1866 (vol. viii pp. 227–308). Also the *Journal Asiatique* for 1879 pp. 192 *et seqq.*

characteristically Persian. And if Salmán was the only Persian who was included in the honoured circle of the *As-hab* or "Companions," many an eminent doctor of Islám was from the first of Persian race, while not a few prisoners of war or their children, such as the four sons of Shírín (Sírín), taken captive at Jalúli, became afterwards eminent in the Muhammadan world. Thus it is by no means correct to imply (as is often done by those who take the narrower view of Persian literary history against which I have expressly guarded myself at the beginning of this book) that the two or three centuries immediately following the Muhammadan conquest of Persia were a blank page in the intellectual life of its people. It is, on the contrary, a period of immense and unique interest, of fusion between the old and the new, of transformation of forms and transmigration of ideas, but in no wise of stagnation or death. Politically, it is true, Persia ceased for a while to enjoy a separate national existence, being merged in that great Muhammadan Empire which stretched from Gibraltar to the Jaxartes, but in the intellectual domain she soon began to assert the supremacy to which the ability and subtlety of her people entitled her. Take from what is generally called Arabian science from exegesis, tradition, theology, philosophy, medicine, lexicography, history, biography, even Arabic grammar the work contributed by Persians, and the best part is gone. Even the forms of State organisation were largely adapted from Persian models. Says al-Fakhrí (ed. Ahlwardt, p. 101), on the organisation of the *diwáns* or Government offices<sup>1</sup>

"The Muslims were the army, and their wars were for the faith, not for the things of this world, and there were never lacking amongst them those who would expend a fair portion of their wealth

<sup>1</sup> Dozy (*l'Islamisme*, p. 156) says "Mais la conversion la plus importante de toutes fut celle des Perses, ce sont eux, et non les Arabes, qui ont donné de la fermeté et de la force à l'islamisme, et, en même temps, c'est de leur sein que sont sorties les sectes les plus remarquables"

in charitable uses and offerings and who desired not in return for their faith and their support of their Prophet any recompense save from God nor did the Prophet or Abu Bakr impose on them any fixed contribution but when they fought and took spoil they took for themselves a share of the spoils fixed by the Law and when any wealth flowed into Madina from any country it was brought to the Prophet's Mosque and divided according as he saw fit Thus matters continued during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr but in the year A H 15 (A D 636) during the Caliphate of Umar he seeing how conquest succeeded conquest and how the treasures of the Persian kings were passing into their possession and how the loads of gold silver precious stones and sumptuous raiment continually followed one another deemed it good to distribute them amongst the Muslims and to divide these riches between them but knew not how he should do or in what manner effect this Now there was in Madina a certain Persian *marzuban* who seeing Umar's bewilderment said to him O Commander of the Faithful! Verily the Kings of Persia had an institution which they called the *diwan* where was recorded all their income and expenditure nothing being excepted therefrom and there such as were entitled to pensions were arranged in grades so that no error might creep in And Umar's attention was roused and he said Describe it to me So the *marzuban* described it and Umar understood and instituted the *diwans*

In the finance department not only was the Persian system adopted, but the Persian language and notation continued to be used till the time of al Hajjaj b Yusuf (about A D 700), when, as we learn from al Baladhuri (pp 300-301), Salih the scribe, a son of one of the captives taken in Sistan, boasted to Zadan, the son of Farrukh, another Persian, who held the position of chief scribe and accountant in the Revenue Office of Sawad (Chaldæa), that he could, if he pleased, keep the accounts wholly in Arabic, which al Hajjaj, to whom his words were reported, ordered him to do "May God cut off thy stock from the world," exclaimed Zadan's son Mardan-shah, "even as thou hast cut the roots of the Persian tongue and he was offered, but refused, 100,000 *dirhams* if he would declare himself unable to effect this transference At this

time, indeed, a strong effort was made by 'Abdu'l-Malik, seconded by his ferocious but able lieutenant al-Hajj'ij, to repress and curtail the foreign influences, Persian and Byzantine, which were already so strongly at work, and to expel non-Arabs from the Government offices, but the attempt resulted only in a partial and temporary success.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, as has been already pointed out, Zoroastrianism, though cast down from its position of a State religion, by no means disappeared from Persia, and the bands of exiles who fled before the Arab invasion first to the islands of the Persian Gulf and then to India, where they founded the Pārsī colonies which still flourish in and about Bombay and Surat, were but a minority of those who still preferred Zoroaster to Muḥammad and the Avesta to the Qur'ān. Pahlawī literature, as we have seen, continued side by side with the new Arabic literature produced by the Persian converts to Islam, the high priests or the Magian faith were still persons of importance, in pretty constant communication with the Government officials, and still enjoying a large amount of influence amongst their co-religionists, to whom was granted a considerable measure of self-government,<sup>2</sup> and the fire-temples, even when laws were promulgated ordering their destruction, were in practice seldom molested, while severe punishment was sometimes inflicted by the Muhammadan authorities on persons whom an indiscreet zeal led to injure or destroy them.<sup>3</sup> Three centuries after the Arab Conquest fire-temples still existed in almost every Persian province, though at the present day, according to the carefully compiled statistics of Houtum-Schindler,<sup>4</sup> the total number of "fire-worshippers" in Persia only amounts to about 8,500. According to Khanikof (*Mémoire sur la partie méridionale de l'Asie Centrale*, p. 193), at

<sup>1</sup> See A von Kremer's *Culturgeschichte d Orients*, vol 1, pp 166-183.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, vol 1, p 183

<sup>3</sup> Cf Arnold's *Preaching of Islām*, p 179

<sup>4</sup> *Die Parsen in Persien*, in the *Z D M G* for 1882, vol xxxvi, pp 54-88. The actual number of fire-temples he gives as twenty-three

the end of the eighteenth century, when Āghā Muhammad Khān, founder of the present Qājār dynasty, laid siege to Kirmān, it alone contained 12,000 Zoroastrian families so that the rapid diminution of their numbers must be regarded as a phenomenon of modern times, though lately, if reliance can be placed on the figures of earlier observers quoted by Houtum Schindler, they appear to have been again gaining ground

In the face of such facts says Arnold (*op laud* pp 180-181) it is surely impossible to attribute the decay of Zoroastrianism to violent conversions made by the Muslim conquerors. The number of Persians who embraced Islam in the early days of the Arab rule was probably very large from the various reasons given above but the late survival of their ancient faith and the occasional record of conversions in the course of successive centuries render it probable that the acceptance of Islam was both peaceful and voluntary. About the close of the eighth century Saman a noble of Balkh having received assistance from Asad ibn 'Abdullah the governor of I furasan renounced Zoroastrianism embraced Islam and named his son Asad after his protector it is from this convert that the dynasty of the Samanids (A D 874-999) took its name. About the beginning of the ninth century Karim ibn Shahriyar was the first king of the Qabusiyya dynasty who became a Musalman and in A D 873 a large number of fire worshippers were converted to Islām in Daylam through the influence of Nasir ul Haqq Abu Muhammad. In the following century about A D 91 Hasan b Ali of the Alid dynasty on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea who is said to have been a man of learning and intelligence and well acquainted with the religious opinions of different sects invited the inhabitants of Tabaristān and Daylam who were partly idolaters and partly Magians to accept Islam many of them responded to his call while others persisted in their former state of unbelief. In the year A H 394 (A D 1003-4) a famous poet Abul Hasan Mihyar a native of Daylam who had been a fire worshipper was converted to Islam by a still more famous poet the Sharif ar Rida who was his master in the poetic art. Scanty as these notices of conversions are yet the

Like another yet more notable convert from Zoroastrianism the celebrated Ibnul Muqaffa Mihyar appears to have been a bad Muslim. Of the former the Caliph al Mahdi used to say I never found a book on Zindiqā (i.e. heresy especially of Manichæan character) which did not

very fact that such can be found up to three centuries and a half after the Muslim Conquest is clear testimony to the toleration the Persians enjoyed, and argues that their conversion to Islam was peaceful, and, to some extent at least, gradual."

For a time, however, the intellectual as well as the political life of Persia and Arabia were so closely connected and even identified with each other that in the next chapters, dealing with the evolution of Islām and the origin of its principal sects and schools of thought under the Umayyad and 'Abbāsid Caliphs, it will be necessary to speak of the two together, and to treat of some matters more closely connected with the latter than with the former.

owe its origin to Ibnu'l-Muqaffa'" To the latter al Qasim ibn Buhārān remarked, on hearing of his conversion, "By becoming a Musliman you have merely passed from one corner of hell to another" (Ibn Khallikān de Slane's translation, vol i, p 432, vol iii, p 517)

## CHAPTER VI

### THE Umayyad Period (A D 661-749)

THE period of the Caliphate (*Khilāfat*) began when Abu Bakr succeeded the Prophet as his *Khaliḥa* (Caliph, vice gerent, or vicar) in June, A D 632, and ended when, in A D 1258, Hulāgu Khān, at the head of his Mongol hordes, seized and sacked Baghdat, and put to death the last Caliph, al Musta'sim billāh. The title, it is true, was, as Sir Edward Creasy says,<sup>1</sup> "perpetuated for three centuries longer in eighteen descendants of the House of 'Abbās, who dwelt in Egypt with titular pomp, but no real power, in the capital of the Mameluke rulers, like the descendants of the Great Mogul in British India, until A D 1517, when the Ottoman Sultan Selim the First, having overthrown the Mameluke dynasty, induced the puppet Caliph to transfer to him the title and visible insignia of the Caliphate, the sacred standard, sword, and mantle of the Prophet. Since that time the Ottoman Sultans claim "the sacred position of Caliph, Vicar of the Prophet of God, Commander of the Faithful, and Supreme Imām of Islām", but whatever advantage they may derive from these high titles,

the Caliphate, as a historical actuality, ceased to exist, after enduring 626 years, in A D 1258<sup>1</sup>

This period falls into three well-marked but very unequal divisions, viz.

1 That of the Orthodox Caliphs (*al-Khulafa'u'r-Ráshidín*) Abú Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmán, and 'Alí (632-661 A D), which may be briefly characterised as the *Theocracy of Islám*

The three periods  
of the Caliphate

2 That of the Umayyad Caliphs (or Kings, for the spiritual rank of Caliph is often denied to them by later Muslim historians), the *Banú Umayya*, who, fourteen in number, ruled from A D 661 to 749 This may be defined as the period of *Arabian Imperialism and Pagan Reaction*

3 That of the 'Abbásid Caliphs, the *Banu'l-'Abbás*, thirty-seven in number, who held sway from A D 719, when, on October 30th, Abu'l-'Abbás 'Abdu'lláh, called *as-Saffáh*, "the Shedder of Blood," was proclaimed Caliph at Kúfa, till the sack of Baghdad and murder of al-Musta'sim by Hulagú and his Mongols in A D 1258 This may be defined as the period of *Persian Ascendancy, and of Philosophical and Cosmopolitan Islám*

During the first period, Madína was the centre of government; during the second, Damascus, during the third, Baghdad. The Mongol Invasion of the thirteenth century, and the destruction of the Caliphate which it entailed, put an end to the formal unity of the Muhammadan Empire in the East and the palmy days of Islám, and is by far the most important event in the history of Asia since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Long before this catastrophe, indeed, the power of the Caliphate had been reduced to a mere shadow of what it was in what Tennyson calls "the golden prime of good Haroun Alraschid", but, though the Empire of the Caliphs was for the most part partitioned out amongst dynasties and rulers whose allegiance, when yielded at all, was as a rule the merest lip-service, Baghdad remained until that fatal day

The Mongol  
Invasion the  
great turning-  
point in the in-  
tellectual as well  
as in the political  
history of Islám

<sup>1</sup> Cf Sir William Muir's very just remarks at p 594 of his *Caliphate its decline, and Fall*

the metropolis of Islam and the centre of learning and culture, while Arabic maintained its position not only as the language of diplomacy and learning, but of polite society and belles lettres. The scientific and critical spirit which we so admire in Muhammadan writers antecedent to the Mongol period becomes rapidly rarer in the succeeding years, and hence it is that Persian literature (that is, the literature written in the Persian language), which falls for the most part in the later days of the Caliphate and in the period subsequent to its fall, cannot, for all its beauties, compare in value or interest with that literature which, though written in Arabic, was to a large extent the product of non Arab and especially Persian minds. The Mongol invasion was not less an intellectual than a political disaster, and a difference, not only of degree but of kind, is to be observed between what was written and thought before and after it.

To write a detailed history of the Caliphs forms no part of the plan on which this book is conceived, especially as this has already been admirably done in German by Dr Gustav Weil (1846-1862) and in English by Sir William Muir. Nor, indeed, are these excellent works amongst the European sources on which we shall chiefly draw in endeavouring to delineate in broad outlines the characteristics of each period, especially as regards its Persian manifestations in the fields of religious and philosophical speculation, culture, politics, and science. For this purpose the most valuable and suggestive books written in European languages are the following. A von Kremer's *Geschichte der herrschenden Ideen des Islams* (1868). Idem, *Culturgeschichtliche Streifzüge auf dem Gebiete des Islams* (1873). Idem, *Culturgeschichte des Orients unter dem Chalifen* (2 vols., 1875-1877). Dozy's *Het Islam* (1863) translated into French by Victor Chauvin under the title *Essai sur l'Histoire de l'Islamisme* (1879). Idem, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne*

*Annals of the Early Caliphate* (1883) *the Caliphate its Rise Decline and Fall* (1891 and 189 ) also *the Life of Mahomet Mahomet and Islam &c*

Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien* (2 vols, 1889-1890); Van Vloten's *Recherches sur la Domination arabe, le Chutisme et les Groyances Messianiques sous le Khalfat des Omayyades* (1894); Idem, *Opkomst der Abbasiden*, T W Arnold's *Preaching of Islam* (1896), and other similar works by Caussin de Perceval, Schmolders, Dugat, &c, to which must be added numerous valuable monographs, such as those of Brunnow on the Khárijites, Goldziher on the Záhírites, de Goeje on the Carmathians, Steiner on the Mu'tazilites, Spitta on the School of al-Ash'arí, and many others

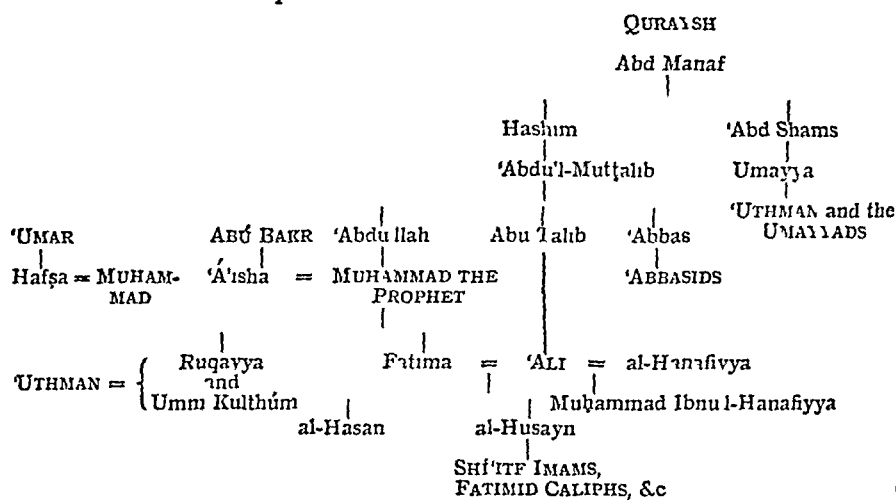
In the two histories of Persia with which Englishmen are most familiar, those of Sir John Malcolm and Clements Markham, the transition period intervening between the Arab Conquest in the seventh century of our era, and the formation of the first independent or semi-independent post-Muhammadian Persian dynasties in the ninth, is rather cursorily and inadequately treated, as though, like the period which separates the fall of the Achæmenian from the rise of the Sásánian dynasties (B.C 330 A.D 226), it were a mere interruption of the national life, instead of being, as in many ways it actually was, the most interesting, and intellectually, the most fruitful of all the periods into which Persian history can be divided. For this reason it will here be discussed with some fulness, especially in what concerns the origin of the first sects whereby Islám was torn asunder

Although the Umayyad Caliphate, strictly speaking, began with the death of 'Alí and the accession of Mu'áwiya in A.D 661, the tendencies which led to its establishment go back to the rule of 'Uthmán (A.D 644-656), the third of the four "Orthodox Caliphs" We have seen that the creation of a common national feeling amongst the Arabs, nay more, of a common religious feeling among all Muslims, in place of the narrow clannishness of the heathen Arabs, was one of the greatest and most notable results of the Prophet's

mission But such counsels of perfection were from the first hard to follow, being too radically opposed to ancient and deeply rooted national instincts, and even the Prophet's partiality for Mecca, his native city, and the Quraysh, his own tribe, had on several occasions given rise to some discontent and murmuring on the part of his allies of Madína (the *Ansár*, or "Helpers") to whose timely aid his cause owed so much Still, on the whole, this ideal of equality amongst all Muslims was fairly maintained until the death of 'Umar in A.D. 644 That it was the ideal is apparent from numerous passages both in the Qur'an and in Tradition, such as "the noblest of you in the sight of God is he who most feareth God" (*Qur'an*, xlix, 13), "the believers are but brethren, so make peace between your two brothers" (*Qur'an*, xlix, 10) "O man! God hath taken away from you the arrogance of heathen days and the ancient pride in ancestry, an Arab hath no other precedence over a barbarian than by virtue of the fear of God, ye are all the progeny of Adam, and Adam himself is of the earth" (Tradition) \* At this time, it is true, there were but a very few non Arabs or "barbarians" who had embraced Islám, and it is doubtful whether, even in his moments of greatest optimism, the Prophet ever dreamed of his religion extending much beyond the Arabian peninsula but here at least is the idea, clearly expressed, of a potential equality amongst believers, and an aristocracy not of birth but of faith

With the accession of 'Uthmán, however, the old nepotism and clannish feeling once more became very evident and dangers of sedition and schism, already imminent by reason of the jealousies between Mecca and Madína, between the *Muhájirín* ("Exiles") and the *Ansár* ("Helpers"), between the Hashimite and Umayyad factions of the Prophet's tribe of Quraysh, and between this tribe and the other Arabs, who regarded its ascendancy with ill concealed discontent, were

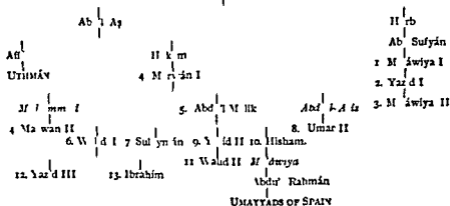
brought to a head by the new Caliph's irresolution and weakness, obstinacy, and undisguised furtherance of the interests of his Umayyad kinsmen, even of those whose attachment to Islām was most open to doubt. To make clearer what follows, two genealogical tables from Stanley Lane-Poole's most useful manual on *the Muhammadan Dynasties* (1894) are here inserted. Of these, the first shows the subdivisions of the tribe of Quraysh and the general connection of the lines of Caliphs.



From this table we see that of the four "Orthodox Caliphs," the two first, Abú Bakr and 'Umar, were the Prophet's fathers-in-law, while the two last, 'Uthmán and 'Alí, were both his sons-in-law; but that 'Alí alone was closely related by blood, he being Muhammad's first cousin, in addition to which he was distinguished by his early and devoted adhesion to the Faith. We also see (and the importance of this fact will appear in the next chapter) that the term Hāshimite, or descendant of Hāshim, is equally applicable to the Shí'ite Imáms descended from 'Alí and the Prophet's daughter Fátima, and to the 'Abbásid Caliphs, but excludes the Umayyads.

The second table shows the relation of the Umayyad Caliphs to one another and to 'Uthmán.

## UMAYYA



From the very beginning of his reign 'Uthmán showed a tendency to favour his friends and kinsmen at the expense and to the detriment of that rigid and unswerving justice which Islám had set up as its ideal. That Abu Lulu a, the Persian slave who had assassinated 'Umar the late Caliph, should suffer the penalty of death was natural enough, but 'Umar's son, 'Ubaydu llah, not content with slaying the assassin, also slew a Persian noble named Hurmuzan, a captive of war who had made profession of Islam, because he suspected him of complicity. Of such complicity there was no proof, and 'Alí, ever rigorous in upholding the laws of Islam, held that 'Ubaydu llah should be put to death, as having slain a believer without due cause. 'Uthmán, however, would not hear of this, but instead named a monetary compensation, which he himself paid <sup>1</sup> and when Ziyad b Labíd, one of the Ansár, upbraided him in verse <sup>2</sup> for his misplaced leniency, he silenced and expelled the over bold poet.

Thus from the very moment of his accession 'Uthmán's readiness to be swayed by personal considerations was apparent, but it became much more conspicuous as time went on. The

Muir's *Caliphate* p 205

The verses will be found in de Goeje's ed of Tabarí Ser I vol v p 196

Arabs in general were embittered against the tribe of Quraysh, whose supremacy they watched with growing jealousy; and now 'Uthmán's open partiality for the Umayyad branch of that tribe, which had strenuously and bitterly opposed the Prophet so long as opposition was possible, and had only made a tardy and unwilling profession of Islám when it could no longer be resisted, thoroughly alienated the Háshimite branch, so that even Quraysh was no longer united. Some of the most inveterate enemies of the Prophet, such as Abú Saïh, 'Uthmán's foster-brother, whom Muhammad would have put to death on the capture of Mecca but for 'Uthmán's intercession, were raised to the highest commands and enriched with the most princely salaries. Men notoriously lax in their religious duties, like Walíd b. 'Uqba, whose father had been put to death by the Prophet after the battle of Badr with a "promise of hell-fire," and Sa'íd b. al-Ás, whose father was slain at the same battle in the ranks of the heathen, were given rich governments. Walíd, to whom the government of Kúfa was given, came drunk to the mosque, said the wrong prayers, and then asked the congregation whether they had had enough, or would like some more. He was of course dismissed, but the further chastisement ordained by Islám was only inflicted by 'Alí's insistence against 'Uthmán's wish. Ibn 'Ámir, the Caliph's young cousin, was made governor of Basra, on hearing which the old governor, Abú Músá, whom he had supplanted, said, "Now ye will have a tax-gatherer to your heart's content, rich in cousins, aunts, and uncles, who will flood you with his harpies." Sa'íd b. al-Ás, the new governor of Kúfa, was as bad as his predecessor, so that the people murmured and said, "One of Quraysh succeedeth another as governor, the last no better than the first. It is but out of the frying-pan into the fire."

The growing discontent had other grounds, which led to the alienation of many old Companions of the Prophet remark-

\* Muir's *Caliphate*, p. 217

able for their piety and ascetic life Ibn Mas'ud, one of the greatest authorities on the text of the Qur'án, was deeply offended by 'Uthmán's high handed recension of the Holy Book, and more particularly by his destruction of all "unauthorised versions" Abu Dharr, (1) who preached the equality of all believers and denounced the growing luxury, was driven into exile, where he died. Innovation, for which no good reason beyond the Caliph's will was assigned, added to the rising flood of disaffection, which culminated in the cruel murder of the aged Caliph by a band of malcontents, in the women's apartments of his own house, in the holy city of Madína, on June 17, A D 656 His wife N'íla, faithful to the last, attempted to ward off with her hand a blow aimed at him by one of the assassins, whereby several of her fingers were cut off These fingers, together with the blood stained shirt of the aged Caliph, were afterwards exhibited by Mu'áwiya in the mosque of Damascus, in order to arouse the anger of the Syrians against the murderers.<sup>2</sup>

The death of 'Uthmán destroyed once and for all the outward semblance of unity which had hitherto existed in Islám, and led directly to wars wherein for the first time the sword was turned by Muslims against their fellow believers 'Alí was at length chosen Caliph—a tardy recognition, as many thought, of his well founded claims to that high office—to the disappointment of Talha and Zubayr, who, incited by 'A'isha, the daughter of Abu Bakr and widow of the Prophet, revolted against him and paid for their presumption with their lives at the Battle of the Camel, wherein ten thousand Muslims perished (December, A D 656) 'Alí himself was most anxious to avoid this carnage, but just when

For a full account of this transaction see Mas'udí's *Muruj al-Dhahab* ed Barbier de Meynard vol iv pp 268–74

Al-Fakhri (ed Ahlwardt) p 110

his efforts at conciliation seemed crowned with success the murderers of 'Uthmán, who were included in his army, fearing lest punishment might fall upon them if peace were restored, succeeded in precipitating the battle

Worse trouble, however, was impending in Syria, where 'Uthmán's kinsman Mu'áwiya was governor, and where the Umayyad influence and interest were supreme.

Mu'áwiya  
refuses to  
acknowledge  
'Alí as Caliph

'Alí, refusing to listen to those who advised him not to interfere with this powerful and cunning governor, persisted in his intention of at once recalling him from his post. Mu'áwiya refused to obey the summons, and retaliated by roundly accusing 'Alí of being privy to 'Uthmán's murder, a charge which had been already formulated by Walíd b 'Uqba (who, as we have seen, had suffered punishment at 'Alí's hands), in some verses<sup>2</sup> addressed to the Hāshimites in general, which conclude

*"Ye have betrayed him ('Uthmán) in order that ye might take his place,  
Even as once Kisrá (Khusraw Parwíz) was betrayed by his satraps"*

Mu'áwiya, therefore, posing as the avenger of 'Uthmán, not merely refused to obey 'Alí, or to acknowledge him as Caliph, but himself laid claim to this title, a pretension in which he was ably supported by the astute 'Amr ibnu'l-'Ás, to whom, as the reward of his services, he promised the government of Egypt. All negotiations having failed, 'Alí, who had left Madína and established himself at Kúfa, declared war on Mu'áwiya and his Syrians, and, with an army of fifty thousand

Battle of Siffin

men, marched against him. The two armies met at Siffin, a place lying between Aleppo and Emesa (Hims) in Syria, and after several weeks of desultory skirmishing and fruitless negotiations, a pitched battle was fought in the last days of July, A D 657. On the third day victory inclined decisively to 'Alí's side, when 'Amr ibnu'l-'Ás, ever fertile in stratagems, counselled Mu'áwiya to bid his troops

<sup>2</sup> Mas'údí, *op cit*, p 286

raise aloft on their lances leaves of the Qur'ān, and cry, "The Law of God! The Law of God! Let that arbitrate between us!" In vain did 'Alī warn his followers against this device, and urge them to follow up their advantage, the fanatical puritans who formed the backbone of his army refused to fight against men who appealed to the Qur'ān—a truce was called, arbitration was accepted by both parties, and even here 'Alī was forced to accept as his representative the feeble and irresolute Abu Musā al Ash'arī, whom he had but lately dismissed for his lukewarmness from the government of Kufa, while Mu'āwiya's cause was committed to the wily and resourceful 'Amr ibn al 'Ās, who, by another discreditable trick,<sup>2</sup> succeeded in getting 'Alī set aside and Mu'āwiya declared Caliph. This took place at Dawmatul Jandal (a place in the Syrian desert just south of the thirtieth degree of latitude, and about equidistant from Damascus and Basra), in February, A.D. 658.

On the disappointment and disgust of 'Alī and his followers it is needless to dwell. A daily commination service, wherein Mu'āwiya and his allies were solemnly anathematised by name, was instituted in the mosques of 'Irāq, which province still remained more or less faithful to 'Alī, and Mu'āwiya returned the compliment at Damascus, where the cursing of 'Alī, his sons and adherents, remained in force till it was abolished by 'Umar II, almost the only God-fearing ruler of the whole Umayyad dynasty. Nor did 'Alī rest content with mere curses—he began to prepare for another campaign against his rival, when other grave events nearer home demanded his attention.

'Alī's followers included, besides personal friends and retainers, political schemers, and the factious and unsteady inhabitants of Basra and Kufa, two parties, diametrically opposed in their views, which represented

Comp. tit. f  
Alī f. rces.

See Muir's *Caliphate* pp. 280-28. al Fakhri (ed. Ahlwardt) pp. III-III4

the two most ancient sects of Islām, the Shī'ites, and the Khārijites. The former were the devoted partisans of 'Alī, the "Faction" (*Shi'a*) of him and his House, the defenders in

The Shī'ites general of the theory which has been exposed at pp 130 *et seqq*, and which we may briefly define as the theory of the Divine Right of the Prophet's descendants and nearest of kin to wield the supreme authority in Islām, both temporal and spiritual. Of these, and of the fantastic doctrines propounded and maintained by the more extreme amongst them, we shall have to speak repeatedly in the following pages, and will only add here that these extreme views as to the sanctity, nay, divinity, of 'Alī had, even during his lifetime, and in spite of his strong disapprobation, found a vigorous exponent in the converted Jew, 'Abdu'llāh ibn Sabā,<sup>1</sup> who carried on a propaganda in Egypt as early as A.D 653, during the Caliphate of 'Uthmān.

The Khārijites (*Khawārij*), "Seceders,"<sup>2</sup> or (as Muir calls them) "Theocratic Separatists," represented the extreme demo-

The Khawārij ciatic view that any free Arab was eligible for election as Caliph, and that any Caliph who ceased to give satisfaction to the commonwealth of believers might be deposed<sup>3</sup>. Their ranks were chiefly recruited from the true Arabs of the desert (especially certain important tribes

<sup>1</sup> See Muir, *op laud*, pp 225-226, Shahrastānī's *Kitābu'l-Mīlāl* (ed Cureton), pp 132-133

<sup>2</sup> Brunnow, however (*op laud*, p 28), considers that this title was originally assumed by these sectaries themselves, not given to them by their enemies, and that it does not imply *rebellion* and *secession*, but, like *Mūhajirūn* (another name assumed by the Kharijites, means simply *exiles from their homes for God's sake*). He refers especially to Qur'an, iv, 101 in support of this view

<sup>3</sup> At a later date these two cardinal tenets were further expanded by the more fanatical Kharijites by the substitution in this formula of "good Muslim" for "free Arab," and the addition of the words "and if necessary slain" after deposed. On the Kharijites consult especially Brunnow's excellent monograph, *Die Charidschiten*, &c (Leyden, 1884), von Kremer's *Herrschenden Ideen*, &c, pp 359-360, Dozy's *Histoire de l'Islamisme*, pp 211-219

like Tamīm), and the heroes of Qādisiyya and other hard fought fields with whom were joined the puritans of Islām, "the people of fasting and prayer" as Shahrastānī calls them, who saw the unity of the Faith imperilled by the ambition of individuals, and its interests subordinated to those of a clique. Alike in their indomitable courage, their fierce fanaticism, and their refusal to acknowledge allegiance save to God, these *Shurdt*, or "Sellers" of their lives for heavenly reward (as they called themselves, in allusion to Qur'an ii, 203)<sup>1</sup> remind us not only of the Wahhābīs of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but of the Scottish Covenanters and the English Puritans, and many a Kharijite poem is couched in words which, *mutatis mutandis*, might have served Balfour of Burleigh.

To this democratic party the aristocracy of Islām, represented by 'Alī and the Hashimite faction of Quraysh, was only in degree less distasteful than the aristocracy of heathenness, represented by Mu'āwiyā and the Umayyads and though they fought on 'Alī's side at the Battle of Siffin, their alliance, as has been already observed, was by no means an unmixed advantage. For after the fiasco resulting from the arbitration on which they themselves had insisted, they came to 'Alī saying,<sup>2</sup> "Arbitration belongs to God alone. What ailed thee that thou madest men arbiters?" "I never acquiesced in the matter of this arbitration," replied 'Alī "it was ye who wished for it and I told you that it was a stratagem on the part of the Syrians, and bade you fight your foes, but ye refused aught save arbitration, and overrode my judgment."

And also Qur'an iv 11. See Brunnow (*op. laud.*) p. 9.

The richest collection of such poems is contained in the *Kamil* of al Mubarrad (composed in the ninth century of our era, edited by Wright 1864-1882) chaps. xlv to liv. A selection of them is contained in Noldeke's *Delectus et Carm. Arab.* (Berlin 1890) pp. 88-94. See also von Kremer's *Culturgeschichte* vol. ii pp. 360-36.

<sup>1</sup> I follow the account given by al-Fakhri (ed. Ahlwardt) pp. 114 *et seq.*

But when there was no escape from arbitration, I made it a condition with the umpires that they should act in accordance with God's Scripture, . . . but they differed, and acted contrary to Scripture, acting in accordance with their own desires, so we are still of our original opinion as to giving them battle" "There is no doubt," answered the Khárijites, "that we originally acquiesced in the arbitration, but we have repented of it, and recognise that we acted in error. If now thou wilt confess thine infidelity (*kuf*r), and pray God to pardon thy fault and thine error in surrendering the arbitration to men, we will return with thee to do battle with thine enemy and our enemy, else will we dissociate ourselves from thee"

'Alí was naturally incensed at the unreasonable behaviour of these men, but his remonstrances and exhortations were of no avail, and ere his retreating army reached Kúfa, twelve thousand of the malcontents did, as they had threatened, dissociate themselves from him, and retired to Harúrá, where they encamped. Adopting as their warcry the words "*Lá hukma illá li'lláh*!" ("Arbitration belongs to none save God!"), they advanced towards Madá'in (Ctesiphon) with the intention of occupying it and establishing a "Council of Representatives" which should serve "as a model to the ungodly cities all around"<sup>1</sup> Foiled in this endeavour by the foresight of the governor, they continued their march to Nahruwán, near the Persian frontier. They also nominated a Caliph of their own 'Abdu'lláh b Wahb of the tribe of Rásib)<sup>2</sup> on March 22, A D 658, and proceeded to slay as unbelievers Muslims who did not share their views, recognise their Caliph, and consent to curse both 'Uthmán and 'Alí. Ferocity was strangely mixed with the most exaggerated scruples in their actions. One of them picked up a date which had fallen from the tree and placed it in his mouth, but cast it away when some of his companions

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *op laud*, p 284.

<sup>2</sup> Brunnow, *op laud*. p 18.

cried out, "Thou hast eaten it without right, having taken it without payment ! Another smote with his sword a pig which happened to pass by him, and hamstrung it "This," exclaimed his fellows, "is a mischief on the earth ! " There upon he sought out the owner and paid him compensation.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand harmless travellers were slain, and women great with child were ripped open with the sword For such cruelties the fanatics offered no apology, on the contrary, when invited by 'Alī to surrender the murderers and depart in peace, they cried, "We have all taken part in the slaughter of the heathen !"

With such a danger threatening their homes, it was not to be expected that 'Alī's troops would consent to march again on Syria until they had made an end of these schismatics 'Alī, still for clemency, suffered such of them as would to withdraw themselves from the Kharijite camp Half of them availed themselves of this offer the remaining two thousand, scornfully rejecting all overtures, stood their ground and perished almost to a man, while of 'Alī's 60,000 warriors only seven fell This happened in May or June, A.D. 658, and served but to render more implacable the enmity of the surviving Kharijites towards 'Alī, whom henceforth they hated even more than they hated Mu'awiya 'Alī's troops, moreover, refused to march against his rival until they had rested and recruited themselves "Our swords are blunted, they said, "our arrows are spent, and we are wearied of warfare let us alone, that we may set our affairs in order, and then we will march."<sup>2</sup> But instead they began to slip away as occasion offered, until at length the camp was left empty and Mu'awiya, waxing ever bolder as he saw the increasing difficulties against which his rival had to struggle, seized Egypt and stirred up revolt even in Basra while fresh Kharijite risings extending throughout the south of

<sup>1</sup> G there g mis-  
fortunes.

Persia (the people of which were won "by the specious and inflammatory cry that payment of taxes to an ungodly Caliph was but to support his cause, and as such intoleiable"),<sup>1</sup>

followed by a series of untoward and painful events,

Truce with  
Mu'awiya

so broke 'Alí's spirit that in A D 660 he was fain to conclude a treaty which left Mu'awiya in

undisturbed possession of Syria and Egypt. A year later

Assassination of  
'Alí, Jan 25,  
A D 661

(January, 661) 'Alí was assassinated in the mosque

of Kúfa by Ibn Muljam and two other Khárijite

fanatics. Thus died, in his sixtieth year, the

Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, the last of the four Orthodox

Caliphs of the Sunnís, the first of the Shí'ite Imáms. He was

succeeded by al-Hasan (the eldest of the three sons<sup>2</sup> born to

him by Fátima, the Prophet's daughter), who, on

Succession and  
abdication of  
al-Hasan

August 10, 661, tamely abdicated, leaving

Mu'awiya undisputed master of the great

Muhammadan Empire, and the Umayyad power firmly

established and universally acknowledged.

The triumph of the Umayyads was in reality, as Dozy well says, the triumph of that party which, at heart, was hostile to Islám, and the sons of the Prophet's most inveterate foes now, unchanged at heart, posed as his legitimate successors and vicegerents, and silenced with the sword those who dared to murmur against their innovations. Nor was cause for murmuring far to seek even in the reign of Mu'awiya, who, in the splendour of his court at Damascus, and in the barriers which he set between himself and his humbler subjects, took as his model the Byzantine Emperors and Persian Kings rather than the first vicars of the Prophet. In the same spirit he nominated his son Yazíd as his successor, and forced this unwelcome nomination on the people of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Madína.

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *op cit*, p 292

<sup>2</sup> One of these died in infancy. The other was al-Husayn.

It was still worse when, on the death of Mu'āwīya (April, A.D. 680), Yazíd came to the throne. No name is more execrated throughout Islām, but most of all in Persia, than his. A Persian who will remain unmoved by such epithets as "liar," "scoundrel," or "robber," will fly into a passion if you call him Yazíd, Shīmr, or Ibn Zay'íd. A Persian poet, who had been rebuked for adding a curse to his name, retorted, "If God can pardon Yazíd, then He will very surely pardon us for cursing him!" Háfídh has been severely censured because the first ode in his *diwān* begins with the second hemistich of the following verse from the poems of this impious Caliph —

*Ana l masmūmu ma' indī bi turyaq' wa lá ráqī  
Adir ka s' wa na'ail-ha alaya ayyuha s sáqī!*

I drugged with poison have neither antidote no guarding charm

Pass the cup and give it me to drink O cupbearer!

Ahlí of Shīráz seeking to apologise for "the Tongue of the Unseen" (*Lisānu l Ghayb*), as the admirers of Háfídh call him, says —

One night I saw Master Háfídh in a dream

I said O thou who art peerless in excellence and learning

Wherefore didst thou take to thyself this verse of Yazíd

Notwithstanding all this virtue and eminence?

He answered Thou understandest not this matter  
The infidel's goods are lawful spoil to the true believer!

But even this excuse would not pass Kátibí or Nishāpur replies —

Greatly do I marvel at Master Háfídh

So that thereby understanding is reduced to helplessness.

What virtue did he perceive in Yazíd's verse

That in his *diwān* he first sings of him?

Although to the true believer the infidel's goods  
 Are lawful spoil, and herein no discussion is possible,  
 { Yet is it a very shameful act for the lion  
 { To snatch a morsel from the mouth of the dog !"

Needless to say Yazíd has found defenders amongst European historians, to some of whom the reversal of unanimous verdicts is always an alluring aim. Nor, indeed, is his  
 Character of  
 Yazíd personality repulsive. Born of a Bedouin mother,<sup>1</sup> bred in the free air of the desert, an eager and skilful huntsman, a graceful poet,<sup>2</sup> a gallant lover, fond of wine, music, and sport, and little concerned with religion, we might, for all his godlessness, levity, and extravagance, have suffered his handsome face,<sup>3</sup> his pretty verses, his kingly qualities, and his joyous appreciation of life to temper our judgment had it not been for the black stain which the tragedy of Kerbelá has left on his memory. "His reign," says al-Fakhrí, "according to the more correct statement, lasted three years and six months. In the first year he slew al-Husayn, the son of 'Alí (on both of whom be Peace!)", and in the second year he sacked Madína and looted it for three days, and in the third year he attacked the Ka'ba"

Of these three outrages, the first in particular sent a shudder of horror throughout the Muhammadan world, nor can any one endowed with feeling read unmoved the  
 The tragedy of  
 Kerbelá (Oct  
 10, A.D. 680) lamentable tale. It was not only a crime but a gigantic blunder, whereby Yazíd and his execrable minions, Ibn Ziyád, Shimr, and the rest irretrievably alienated from the House of Umayya not the love or loyalty for there was little enough of that already but the tacit toleration of all those who loved the Prophet or cared for the religion which he had founded. The *Shi'a*, or "Faction" of 'Alí, had, as we have seen, hitherto been sadly lacking in enthusiasm and self-

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *op cit*, p. 316

<sup>2</sup> Some very pretty verses by him are given by al-Fakhrí (ed. Ahlwardt), pp. 137-138

<sup>3</sup> Al-Fakhrí, p. 67

devotion but henceforth all this was changed, and a reminder of the blood stained field of Kerbelâ, where the grandson of the Apostle of God fell at length, tortured by thirst and surrounded by the bodies of his murdered kinsman, has been at any time since then sufficient to evoke, even in the most lukewarm and heedless, the deepest emotion, the most frantic grief, and an exaltation of spirit before which pain, danger, and death shrink to unconsidered trifles. Yearly, on the tenth day of Muharram the tragedy is rehearsed in Persia, in India, in Turkey, in Egypt, wherever a Shi'ite community or colony exists, and who has been a spectator, though of alien faith, of these *ta'ziyas* without experiencing within himself something of what they mean to those whose religious feeling finds in them its supreme expression? As I write it all comes back the wailing chant, the sobbing multitudes, the white raiment red with blood from self inflicted wounds, the intoxication of grief and sympathy. Well says al Fakhri<sup>1</sup> —

This is a catastrophe whereof I care not to speak at length deeming it alike too grievous and too horrible. For verily it was a catastrophe than which naught more shameful hath happened in Islam. Verily as I live the murder of [Ali] the Commander of the Faithful was the Supreme Calamity but as for this event there happened therein such foul slaughter and leading captive and shameful usage as cause men's flesh to creep with horror. And again I have dispensed with any long description thereof because of its notoriety for it is the most celebrated of catastrophes. May God curse every one who had a hand therein or who ordered it or took pleasure in any part thereof! From such may God not accept any substitute or atonement! May He place them with those whose deeds involve the greatest loss whose effort miscarries even in this present life while they fondly imagine that they do well!

The tragedy of Kerbala says Sir William Muir decided not only the fate of the Caliphate but of Mahometan kingdoms long after the Caliphate had waned and disappeared. Who that has seen the wild and passionate grief with which at each recurring

anniversary, the Muslims of every land spend the live-long night, beating their breasts and vociferating unweariedly the frantic cry—*Hasan, Hosein ! Hasan, Hosein !*—in wailing cadence can fail to recognise the fatal weapon, sharp and double-edged, which the Omeyyad dynasty allowed thus to fall into the hands of their enemies ?”

The rebellion of ‘Abdu’lláh ibn Zubayr, who for nine years (A D 683–692) maintained himself as independent Caliph in the Holy Cities, like the more formidable insurrection of Mukhtár (A D 683–687), owed its success to the general desire for vengeance on the murderers of al-Husayn and his kinsmen which possessed not only the whole Shí’ite party, but even many of the Khárijites<sup>1</sup>. In the sack of Madína by Yazíd’s army (A.D. 682) there perished eighty “Companions” of the Prophet, and no fewer than seven hundred “Readers” who knew by heart the whole Qur’án. The blood of these too cried for vengeance, as did the desecrated sanctuary of Mecca. Kerbelá at least was amply avenged by Mukhtár (A D. 686), who put to death, in many instances with torture, Ibn Ziyád, Shimr, ‘Amr ibn Sa’d, and several hundred persons of lesser note who had borne a share in that guilty deed. He himself, however, was slain less than a year afterwards by Mus‘ab, the brother of Ibn Zubayr, together with 7,000 or 8,000 of his followers. The growing dissensions whereby the Musulmán world was torn found a remarkable illustration in June, A D 688, when four rival leaders the Umayyad Caliph ‘Abdu’l-Malik, ‘Alí’s son Muhammad (generally known as “*Ibnu’l-Hanafíyya*,” “the son of the Hanafite woman,” in allusion to his mother), Ibn Zubayr, and Najda the Khárijite presided over the ceremonies of the Pilgrimage at Mecca, each at the head of his own followers.

The movement headed by Mukhtár was, as we have seen, essentially Shí’ite, the cry was throughout for vengeance on

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *op cit*, p. 332

the murderers of al Husayn and his companions, and it professed to aim at establishing the rights of the above mentioned *Ibnu l Hanafiyya* <sup>1</sup> Herein it differed from later Shi'ite movements, since it did not recognise the importance attached by these to direct descent either from the Prophet through his daughter Fâtima (who was the mother of both al Hasan and al Husayn, but not, of course, of *Ibnu l Hanafiyya*), or from the Persian Royal House of Sasan. This double qualification appears first in al Husayn's son 'Alî, called *as Sajjâd*, "the Worshipper, or more often *"Zaynu l 'Abidin*, "the Ornament of the Devout, whose mother was believed to be the daughter of Yazdigird <sup>2</sup> and it was in him and his descendants that the legitimist aspirations of the two great branches into which the later Shi'ites became divided (the "Sect of the Twelve" and the "Sect of the Seven") first found complete satisfaction. Amongst Mukhtar's followers there were, as we know, a great number of non Arab "clients" (*mawla*, pl *mawall*), of whom the majority were in all probability Persians. Of his army of 8,000 men which capitulated to Mus'ab, the brother of Ibn Zubayr, less than one tenth (some 700) were Arabs <sup>3</sup>. The causes which enlisted these foreign Muslims in his ranks have been most carefully

See *al Ya qû bî* ed Houtsma, vol II p 308

See pp 130 *et seqq supra* and *al Ya qû bî* excellent history (ed Houtsma) vol II pp 93 and 363. His mother says this historian (who died in the latter half of the ninth century of our era) was Harîr [name uncertain] the daughter of Yazdigird the Persian King and this was because when Umar b al Khattâb brought in the two daughters of Yazdigird he gave one of them to al Husayn the son of 'Alî who named her the Gazelle. And when 'Alî the son of al Husayn [and this Persian princess] was mentioned some of the noblest used to say: All men would be glad if their mothers were [such] slaves!

<sup>3</sup> Muir *op cit* p 336. It is instructive to observe says this historian the distinctive value at this period placed on the life of Arabs when it was calmly proposed to set the Arab prisoners free and slay the clients of foreign blood. All however were after much discussion put to death. Dinawarî (p 296) also mentions that there were many Persians amongst Mukhtar's followers.

studied by Van Vloten in his scholarly *Recherches sur la domination arabe*, &c, the work to which we are most indebted in the following paragraphs.

The Umayyad rule reached its culminating point in the reign of 'Abdu'l-Malik (A D 685-705), in which the purely Arabian secular power reached its zenith. Then, as we have seen, Arabic coinage first came into general use, the Government accounts were trans-

Reign of 'Abdu'l-Malik (A D 685-705)

ferred from the Persian into the Arabic language, the old Arabian aristocracy was dominant, the foreign "clients" were despised and oppressed, and the feelings of the pious Muslims

especially the Ansár, or "Helpers," of Madína, and the loyal adherents of the House of the Prophet were repeatedly and ruthlessly outraged. 'Abdu'l-Malik's capable but cruel lieutenant, Hajjáj ibn Yúsuf (a name hardly less execrated than those of Yazíd, Ibn Ziyád, and Shímr), who first recommended himself to his master's notice by his readiness to

Cruelty of al-Hajjaj.

undertake the siege and bombardment of Mecca<sup>1</sup> and the suppression of Ibn Zubayr's rebellion, was for more than twenty-two years (A D 691-713) the blood-thirsty and merciless scourge of the Muslim world. The number of persons put to death by him in cold blood, apart from those slain in battle, is estimated at 120,000; and his savage harangue to the people of Kúfa,<sup>2</sup> beginning, "*By God! I see glances fixed upon me, and necks stretched forward, and heads ripe for the reaping, ready to be cut off, and I am the man to do it!*" is typical of the man's ferocious nature. Not less typical of his master, 'Abdu'l-Malik, are the words wherewith he is said to have received the news of his accession to the Caliphate<sup>3</sup>. He was reading the Qur'án when the messenger came to him; on hearing the message, he closed the holy volume, saying, "*This is a separation between me and thee!*"<sup>4</sup> To the

<sup>1</sup> Al-Ya'qúbí, vol II, p 318

<sup>2</sup> See Mas'údí's *Murúju'dh-Dhabab*, ed B de Meynard, vol 5, pp 294-300

<sup>3</sup> Al-Fakhrí (ed Ahlwardt), pp 146-147

<sup>4</sup> Qur'án, xviii, 77

sanctity of places and persons he was equally insensible when political considerations bade him destroy, and his Syrians hesitated not to obey his behests. "Reverence and loyalty clashed," says al Yaqubī,<sup>1</sup> "and loyalty conquered."

Thus then as Dozy well remarks the party hostile to Islam did not rest until they had subdued the two Sacred Cities turned the mosque of Mecca into a stable, burned the Ka'ba and inflicted deep humiliation on the descendants of the first Muslims. The Arab tribe which a minority had subdued and compelled to embrace Islam made it pay dearly for this double success. The whole Umayyad period is nothing else but the rejection and triumph of the pagan principle. The Caliphs themselves were with about one exception either indifferent or infidel. One of them Wālid II (A.D. 743-744) even went so far as to suffer his concubines to take his place in public prayer and to use the Qur'an as a target for his arrows.<sup>2</sup>

Broadly speaking, the policy of the Umayyads utterly alienated four classes of their subjects, to wit —

The Umayyad  
rulers  
ruled by Dozy

(1) The pious Muslims, who saw with horror and detestation the sacrilegious actions, the ungodly lives, the profanity and the worldliness of their rulers. Amongst these were included nearly all the "Companions" (*Ashab*) and the "Helpers" (*Anṣār*), and their descendants. From these elements the rebellion of Ibn Zubayr derived most of its strength.

Devoted  
Muslims.

(2) The "Faction" (*Shī'a*) of 'Alī, which had suffered from the House of Umayyā the irreparable wrongs, culminating in the tragedy of Kerbelā of which we have already spoken. This constituted the kernel of al Mukhtār's rebellion.

2. Shī'ites.

(3) The Kharijites, or puritan theocrats, who, reinforced by malcontents and freebooters of every kind, continued, till about A.D. 700, to cause continual

3. Khawarij

Vol II p 300

I *Islamisme* (Chravins translation) p 149

<sup>1</sup> See al Fakhri p 159 where a pair of verses addressed by him to the misused Qur'an are cited

trouble of the most serious kind to the Umayyad Government.<sup>1</sup>

(4) The "Clients" (*Mawālī*), or non-Arab Muslims, who, far from being treated by the Government as equal to their co-religionists of Arab birth, were regarded as subject-races to be oppressed, exploited and despised by their rulers

Following Van Vloten's admirable researches, it is of this last class in particular that we shall now speak. This learned writer ascribes the fall of the Umayyad dynasty and the triumph of the 'Abbāsids mainly to three causes to wit

(1) The inveterate hatred of a subject race towards its foreign oppressors

(2) The Shi'ite movement, or Cult of the descendants of the Prophet

(3) The expectation of a Messiah or deliverer

The rivalry of the Arab tribes of the north and the south, a rivalry carried with them to the remotest towns which they occupied, and immortalised in the celebrated verses of Nasr ibn Sayyār to which we shall presently refer, has, in his opinion, been exaggerated as a factor in the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate, and is consequently relegated to a secondary place.

The condition of the conquered races—not only those who embraced Islām, but also those who continued to profess the

Jewish, Christian, and Magian faiths—was, as we have already seen, tolerable, if not precisely

enviable, in the pre-Umayyad days.<sup>2</sup> Under the Umayyad rule, however, with its strong racial prejudices and aggressive imperialism, wars and invasions originally undertaken, in part at least, for the propagation of Islām degenerated into mere predatory raids,<sup>3</sup> of which booty was the principal

<sup>1</sup> The death of Shabīb b Yazīd ash-Shaybānī, about A.D. 699, is considered by Brunnow (*op cit*, p. 49) to mark the end of the more serious Kharijite insurrections

<sup>2</sup> Van Vloten, *op cit*, pp. 3 and 14-15

<sup>3</sup> Idem, pp. 4-7

it not the sole aim. But this did not suffice to meet the growing luxury and extravagance of the ruling class, and a heavier burden of taxation was constantly imposed on the subject races, so that the profession of Islām became to them, from the material point of view, but a doubtful relief. Embezzlement and peculation, moreover, became increasingly common amongst the governors and their myrmidons (*ṣanī'a*),<sup>1</sup> who, for the most part, simply strove to enrich themselves by every means in their power during their tenure of office. These peculations were so serious that a regular process of "squeezing" (*istikhraj*) came to be practised by each new governor on his predecessor, the right of exercising this privilege being actually bought from the central Government at Damascus. The sums which these tyrannical governors were thus compelled to disgorge were sometimes very great: thus, for instance, Yusuf ibn 'Umar extracted from his predecessor in the government of 'Irāq, Khālid al Qasrī, and his creatures, no less than seventy million *dirhams* (about £2,800,000). The burden of all these exactions fell ultimately on the wretched peasantry, who had no means of lodging any effective complaint, and it was aggravated by the humiliating circumstances attendant on the collection of the taxes.<sup>2</sup> The old Persian aristocracy and landed proprietors (*dihqan*) did, it is true, succeed in preserving much of their power and wealth by embracing Islām and throwing in their lot with the conquerors, to whom their services were needful and their local influence and knowledge indispensable, but for the humbler classes it was not so, for, as Van Vloten remarks, "the ambition and racial pride of the Arabs, combined with their greed, offered an insuperable obstacle to the amelioration of their lot. The "clients" were, indeed, regarded by the Arabs as an inferior race, little better than slaves. "Nothing, says the historian Tabarī, in speaking of the revolt of Mukhtār (whose supporters, as we have seen, consisted to a great extent of "clients, or non Arab Muslims, *Mawālī*), "so

exasperated the [Arab] Kúfans as to see Mukhtár assign to the clients' their share of the spoil 'You have taken from us our clients,' they cried, 'who are the spoil which God hath destined for us with all this province. We have liberated them, hoping for a reward from God, but you do not trouble yourself about this, and cause them to share in our booty' "1

Under the government of the cruel and godless Haggáj ibn Yúsuf, converts to Islám were compelled to pay the *jizya*, or poll-tax levied on non-Muslims, from which they ought to have been exempt. Their discontent caused them to join the rebellion of 'Abdu'r-Rahmán ibn Ash'ath in great numbers, but the revolt was quenched in blood, and the "clients" were driven back to their villages, the names of which were branded on their hands.<sup>2</sup> The action of al-Haggáj, as von Kremer remarks, put an end to the hopes entertained by the "clients" and new converts of becoming the equals of the dominant race, but their discontent continued, and was the most potent of the causes which contributed to the downfall of the Umayyad dynasty.<sup>3</sup>

"Of all the Umayyads," says Dozy,<sup>4</sup> "'Umar II (A.D. 717-720) was the only truly believing and pious prince. He was not moved by pecuniary interest, but, on the other hand, the propagation of the faith was all the more dear to his heart. The officials found it difficult to adapt themselves to this new principle, which contrasted so strongly with that which had hitherto been in force. 'If things continue in Egypt as at present,' wrote an official to the Caliph, 'the Christians will, without exception, embrace Islám, and the State will lose all its revenues.' 'I should regard it as a great blessing,' replied 'Umar, 'if all the Christians were converted, for God sent His Prophet to act as an apostle, not as a tax-collector.' To the governor of Khurásán, who complained that many of the Persians in his province had only embraced Islám in order to be exempt from the payment of the poll-tax (*jizya*), and that they had not caused themselves to be circumcised, he replied in a similar strain, 'God sent Muhammad to make known the true faith

<sup>1</sup> Van Vloten, *op cit*, p. 16

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 17 and 26-27

<sup>3</sup> *Sticfzûge*, p. 24 <sup>4</sup> *L'Islamisme* (Chauvin's translation), pp. 180-181

unto men not to circumcise them He did not therefore interpret too rigorously the prescriptions of the law he did not ignore the fact that many conversions were lacking in sincerity but at the same time he saw and saw truly that if the children and grand children of these converts were brought up as Muslims they would one day become as good perhaps even better believers than the Arabs

'Umar ibn 'Abdu l- 'Aziz stands out as a bright and noble exception amidst the godless, greedy, self seeking rulers of the House of Umayyā His rule, it is true, inspired throughout by considerations of the other world rather than of this, was disastrous to the revenue, his methods, faithfully copied from those which prevailed during the Caliphate of his illustrious namesake 'Umar ibn al Khaṭṭāb, were too conservative—even reactionary—to achieve success and the hopes aroused once more in the breasts of the subject races by his endeavours to secure for them justice and security, but destined only to be crushed again by his successors, did but quicken and strengthen the growing reaction against Arab imperialism Judged from the worldly point of view, in short, 'Umar II struck a fatal blow at the supremacy of his House and race, judged by the religious standard he acted as a faithful Muslim should By his abolition of the public cursing of 'Alī in the mosques he gained the approbation of all pious Muhammadans, and must to some extent have conciliated the Shi'ite party The poet Kuthayyir has some verses<sup>2</sup> praising him for this, which begin —

*Thou hast succeeded to the throne and didst not reile All nor  
terrify  
The innocent man nor follow the counsel of the evil doer  
Thou didst speak and didst confirm that thou didst say by what  
Thou didst do and every Muslim became well content*

Cf Van Vloten *op cit* pp 2 - 3

Cited by al Fakhri (ed Ahlwardt) pp 154-155

‘Umar’s death nearly coincided with the end of the first century of the Muhammadan era, at which time, added to the prevailing discontent of the subject-races, there seems to have been a prevalent belief that some great revolution was impending

End of the first  
century of the  
hijra Begin-  
ning of the  
‘Abbasid propa-  
ganda

“In this year” (A H 101 = A D 719-720), says Dīnawarī,<sup>1</sup> “the Shī‘ites sent deputations to the Imām Muhammad b ‘Alī b ‘Abdu’llāh b ‘Abbās b ‘Abdu’l-Muttalib b Hāshim,<sup>2</sup> whose abode was in the land of Syria, at a place called al-Ḥumayma. The first of the Shī‘ites who thus came forward were Maysara al-‘Abdī, Abū ‘Ikrima the saddler, Muhammad b Khunays, and Hayyān the druggist. These came to him, desiring to swear allegiance to him, and said, ‘Stretch out thine hand that we may swear allegiance to thee in the endeavour to secure for thee this sovereignty, that perchance by thee God may quicken justice and slay oppression, for verily now is the time and season of this, which we have found handed down from the most learned amongst you.’ Muhammad b ‘Alī answered them saying, ‘*This is the season of what we hope and desire herein, because of the completion of a hundred years of the calendar.* For verily never do a hundred years pass over a people but God maketh manifest the truth of them that strive to vindicate the right, and bringeth to naught the vanity of them that countenance error, because of the word of God (mighty is His Name).” “Or like him who passed by a village, when it was desolate and turned over on its roofs, and said, ‘How shall God revive this after its death?’ And God made him die for a hundred years, then He raised him up.”<sup>3</sup> Go, therefore, O man, and summon the people cautiously and secretly, and I pray that God may fulfil your undertaking and make manifest [the fruits of] your Mission, and there is no power save in Him.”

Such was the beginning of the celebrated “Mission” or “Propaganda” (*da‘wa*) of the ‘Abbāsids, which, working silently but surely on the abundant elements of disaffection which already existed, undermined the Umayyad power, and within thirty years overthrew the tottering edifice of their dynasty. The agents of this propaganda (*dā‘ī*, plural *du‘āt*)—able, self-devoted men, who, though avoiding any premature

<sup>1</sup> Ed Guirgass, pp 334 *et seqq*

<sup>2</sup> See the table on p 214 *supra*

<sup>3</sup> Qur’ān 11, 261

outbreak, were at any moment ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause—worked especially on the ferment of discontent which leavened the Persian province of Khurasan, where, as Dinawari tells us (p 335)—

They invited the people to swear allegiance to Muhammad b Ali and sought to disgust them with the rule of the Umayyad by reason of their evil conduct and their grievous tyranny  
Dinawari cited. Many in Khurasan responded to their call but some what of their doings becoming known and bruited abroad reached the ears of Saïd [b Abdul 'Aziz b al Hakam b Abul As the governor of Khurasan] So he sent for them and when they were brought before him said Who are ye? Merchants they replied And what said he is this which is currently reported concerning you? What may that be? they asked We are informed said he that ye be come as propagandists for the house of Abbas O Amir they answered we have sufficient concern for ourselves and our own business to keep us from such doings! So he let them go and they went out from before him and departing from Merv began to journey through the province of Khurasan and the villages thereof in the guise of merchants summoning men unto the Imam Muhammad b Ali Thus they continued to do for two years when they returned to the Imam Muhammad b Ali in the land of Syria and informed him that they had planted in Khurasan a tree which they hoped would bear fruit in due season And they found that there had been born unto him his son Abul Abbas whom he commanded to be brought forth unto them saying This is your master and they kissed his limbs all over ۞

On the support of the oppressed and slighted Persians especially the propagandists could reckon, for these were a wise and capable people with a great past, reduced to misery and treated with contempt by a merely martial race, inferior to them in almost every respect save personal valour and love of independence

Prisl support of Abbasid  
 Called *Khuzayna* on account of his effeminate manners See Muir *op laud* pp 384-386

Afterwards called *as Saffâh* ( the Shedder of blood ) who was the first Caliph of the House of Abbas

Mukhtár and his general, Ibráhím ibnu'l-Ashtar, had already proved the worth of the Persians, from whom, as we have seen, their ranks were largely, indeed chiefly, recruited. When Furát and 'Umayr, officers in the Syrian army sent by the Caliph 'Abdu'l-Malik against Mukhtár, visited Ibnu'l-Ashtar in his camp, they complained that from the time they entered his lines until they reached his presence they had scarcely heard a word of Arabic, and asked him how with such an army he could hope to withstand the picked troops of Syria.

Worth of the Persians appreciated by Mukhtár and Ibnu'l-Ashtar

"By God!" replied Ibnu'l-Ashtar, "did I find none but ants [as my allies], yet would I assuredly give battle to the Syrians therewith, how then in the actual circumstances? For there is no people endowed with greater discernment wherewith to combat them than these whom thou seest with me, who are none other than the children of the knights and satraps of the Persians." Mukhtár also "promoted those of Persian descent and assigned gifts to them and their children, and set them in high places, withdrawing from the Arabs, and putting them at a distance, and disappointing them. Thereat were they angered, and their nobles assembled, and came in unto him and reproached him. But he answered, "May God be remote from none but yourselves! I honoured you, and you turned up your noses, I gave you authority, and you destroyed the revenues, but these Persians are more obedient to me than you, and more faithful and swift in the performance of my desire."

There was, however, another party whose support was needed for the success of the 'Abbásid propaganda, namely the Shí'ites. These, holding in general the same views as to the rights of the Family of the Prophet, yet differed in detail as to which candidate of that house had the better claim

\* See Dinawarí, pp. 300-302, 306, 310, and 315

Broadly speaking, they became divided, on the death of al Husayn, into two parties, of which the one supported his younger half brother, Muhammad ibnu l Hanafiyya, and the other his son Alī, better known as Zaynu l ʿAbidin.

The former party, on the death of Ibnu l Hanafiyya, transferred their allegiance to his son Abu Hāshim (whence they received the name of Hāshimiyya), who, as Van Vloten thinks,<sup>2</sup> was the first to organise a propaganda, and to encourage the feelings of adoration with which the Shiʿites were from the first disposed to regard their Imāms and the belief in an esoteric doctrine whereof the keys were committed to his keeping. This Abu Hāshim died (poisoned, it is said, by the Umayyad Caliph Sulaymān)<sup>2</sup> in A H 98 (A D 716-717), bequeathing his rights to Muhammad b ʿAlī, the head of the House of ʿAbbās. Thenceforth the Hāshimiyya and the propaganda which they had organised became the willing instruments of the ʿAbbāsids.

The second party of the Shiʿa, or Imāmiyya, were less easily attached to the ʿAbbāsīd cause, since in their view the Imām must be of the descendants of ʿAlī and Fātima, their actual Imām at this time being ʿAlī Zaynu l ʿAbidin, the son of al Husayn, who died in A H 99 or 100 (A D 718)<sup>3</sup>. To secure the support of these, the ʿAbbāsīd propaganda was carried on in the name of Hāshim, the common ancestor of both ʿAbbāsids and ʿAlids, and only at the last, when success was achieved, was it made clear, to the bitter disappointment of ʿAlī's partisans, that the House of ʿAbbās was to profit by their labours to the exclusion of the House of ʿAlī.

So the propaganda continued actively but silently. Some times the propagandists would be taken and put to death by the Government, as happened to Abu ʿIkrima and Hayyān, in whose place, however, five others were immediately despatched

to Khurásán, with orders to be cautious and prudent, and to disclose nothing until they had put a binding oath on the inquirer.<sup>1</sup> During the reign of Hishám, while Khálid was governor of 'Iráq, several strange and serious outbreaks of Khájrites and Shí'ites occurred, the leaders of which were in several cases burned to death.<sup>2</sup> In Khurásán, on the other hand, a somewhat unwise leniency was shown by the Caliph, in spite of the warnings of his governor, towards the 'Abbásid propagandists,<sup>3</sup> whose movements were controlled and directed by a council of twelve *naqls* and a Senate of seventy subordinate chiefs.<sup>4</sup> Now and then, however, some *dál* would break loose from control and preach the wildest doctrines of the extreme Shí'ites (*al-Ghulāt*), as happened in the case of al-Khaddāsh, who was put to death in A D 736. For further information concerning him and the Rāwandís and Khurramís we must refer the reader to Van Vloten's masterly study (pp 47-51), and to ch. ix *infra*.

About A D 743, Muhammad b. 'Alí the 'Abbásid died, after nominating as his successors first his son Ibráhím, and after him his other sons Abu'l-'Abbás and Abú Ja'far, of whom the first was put to death by Marwán II, the last Umayyad Caliph, about A D. 747-748, while the two others lived to enjoy the fruits of the long and arduous labours of the 'Abbásid propaganda, and to inaugurate the 'Abbásid Caliphate. About the same time, too, appeared on the scene that remarkable man, Abú Muslim who, having contributed more than any one else to the overthrow of the Umayyads and the victory of the 'Abbásids, himself at last fell a victim to the jealousy of those who owed him so great a debt of gratitude.

Everything now portended that the final struggle was at hand. Marwán II, nicknamed "the Ass" (*al-Himár*) on account of his endurance in battle, succeeded to the throne in

<sup>1</sup> Dinawarí, pp 336-338

<sup>3</sup> Dinawarí, p 338

<sup>2</sup> Muir, *op laud*, pp 391-392

<sup>4</sup> Van Vloten, *op laud*, p 47

A.D. 745, and men remembered the prophecy that in the "Year of the Ass" deliverance should come, and that 'Ayn the son of 'Ayn the son of 'Ayn ('Abdu lláh b 'Alí b 'Abdu lláh i.e., Abu l 'Abbás, afterwards known as as-Saffah) would kill Mím the son of Mím the son of Mím (Marwan the son of Muhammad the son of Marwan, the 1st Umayyad Caliph) <sup>1</sup> Such dark sayings were widely current and greedily absorbed, while the apocryphal books of the Jews and Christians, prophetic poems (*maláhim*), and the like were eagerly studied by the long suffering subject races, who felt that now at length their deliverance was at hand, and that the Advent of the Promised One "who should fill the earth with justice after that it had been filled with iniquity" could not long be deferred. Only the Caliph Marwan and his courtiers seemed blind to the signs of the gathering storm, and that in spite of the repeated warnings of his lieutenants in the East, notably Nasr ibn Sayyár, the governor of Khurásán, who wrote to him that 200,000 men had sworn allegiance to Abu Muslim, and concluded his letter with some very fine and very celebrated verses, of which the translation is as follows <sup>2</sup> —

W rml g f N  
b Sayy t th  
Umayyads.

*I see amidst the embers the glow of fire and it wants but little to  
burst into a blaze  
And if the wise ones of the people quench it not its fuel will be  
corpses and skulls  
Verily fire is kindled by two sticks and verily words are the  
beginning of warfare  
And I cry in amazement Would that I knew whether the House  
of Umayya were awake or asleep!*

To the Arab garrisons too, torn by tribal feuds and heedless of the impending danger, he addressed the following verses <sup>3</sup> —

See Van Vloten *op laud* p 57

See al Fakhri p 170 Dinawari p 356 al Ya'qubi vol II p 408  
Noldeke's *Delectus carminum arabicorum* pp 87-88 &c

<sup>3</sup> Noldeke *op laud* p 88

"Tell those of Rabī'a in Merv and her brethren<sup>1</sup> to rise in wrath  
 ere wrath shall avail nothing,  
 And to declare war, for verily the people have raised a war on  
 the skirts of which the wood is ablaze!  
 What ails you that ye stir up strife amongst yourselves, as though  
 men of sense were absent from among you,  
 And neglect an enemy who already overshadows you, a hetero-  
 geneous horde, devoid alike of religion and nobility?  
 They are no Arabs of ours that we should know them, nor even  
 decent clients, if their pedigree be declared,  
 But a people who hold a faith whercof I never heard from the  
 Prophet, and which the Scriptures never brought,  
 And should one question me as to the essence of their religion,  
 verily their religion is that the Arabs should be slain!"

Vain, however, were these and other warnings<sup>2</sup> Khurāsān  
 was seething with disaffection and revolt, and Abū Muslim,  
 having assured himself at length that all was  
 ready, raised the Black Standard<sup>3</sup> of the 'Abbāsids  
 at the village of Siqadanj, near Merv, on June 9,

Raising of the  
Black Standard  
of the 'Abbāsids,  
June 9, A.D. 747  
 A.D. 747 This standard bore the following  
 significant inscription from the Qur'ān *Permission* [to fight]  
*is accorded to those who take up arms because they have been unjustly  
 treated.*" Yet for a while the insurrection did not spread  
 beyond the extreme north-east of Khurāsān, Nasā, Biward,  
 Herāt, Marwarūdh, and the surrounding regions. In response  
 to the appeal of Nasr b Sayyār the Caliph Marwān wrote.<sup>4</sup>  
 "Verily he who is present seeth what he who is absent seeth  
 not do thou, then, treat this disease which hath appeared  
 amongst you!" The only practical step which it occurred to  
 him to take was to seize, imprison, and poison Ibrāhīm the

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, the other towns of Khurāsān

<sup>2</sup> See the gloomy but forcible verses of the poet Hārith b 'Abdu'llāh al-Ja'dī and of the Umayyad prince 'Abbas b al-Walid cited by Van Vloten (*op laud*, pp 62-63), also Dīnawarī, pp 358 and 359

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the significance of the black standards and apparel adopted by the 'Abbāsids (hence called *al-Musawwida*), see Van Vloten, *op laud*, pp 63-65, and references there given

<sup>4</sup> Al-Fakhrī, pp 170-171

‘Abbāsīd, whereupon his two brothers Abul ‘Abbās and Abu Ja‘far, accompanied by some of their kinsmen, fled from al Humayma, their home in Syria, and escaped to Kufa, where they were concealed and cared for by Abu Salma and other leading men of the Shi‘ites

Then says al Fakhri there occurred between Abu Muslim and Nasr b Sayyar and the other Amirs of I hurasan engagements and battles wherein the victory was to the *Musawwida* that is the army of Abu Muslim who were called *Musawwida* [ the people who make black ] because the raiment which they chose for the House of Abbas was black in colour. Pegard now the Power of God (exalted is He!) and how when He willeth aught He prepares the means therefor and how when He desireth anything nothing can oppose His command. So when He had decreed that the dominion should pass unto the House of Abbas He prepared for them all the means thereto. For the Imam Ibrahim b Muhammad b Abdullah b al Abbas was in Syria or in the Hijaz seated on his prayer mat occupied with himself his devotions and the concerns of his family and not possessed of any great worldly power while the people of I hurasan fought for him risking their lives and property for him though most of them neither knew him nor could distinguish between his name and his personality. Nor did he spend on them any wealth or bestow on any one of them horse or arms nay rather it was they who bestowed wealth on him and brought him tribute every year. And since God had decreed the abasement of Marwan and the disruption of the kingdom of the Umayyads although Marwan was the acknowledged Caliph and was possessed of armies and wealth and weapons and worldly goods to the fullest extent yet did men desert in all directions from him and his authority waxed weaker and his tenure was shaken and he ceased not being worsted till he was routed and slain.

The enthusiasm of the *Musawwida* and their devotion to Abu Muslim—"homme sombre et dur que les jouissances de ce monde n'occupaient guere"<sup>2</sup>—were unbounded, while their obedience was such that they would neither accept ransoms nor slay the enemy who lay at their feet without the command

of their chiefs. Amongst the Arabs, on the other hand, there was an utter lack of enthusiasm, patriotism, or loyalty; "chacun avait en vue ses intérêts personnels ou tout au plus l'intérêt de sa tribu : se dévouer pour les Omayyades personne n'y pensait, même s'il faut en croire Ya'qoubi, les Yéménites de Merw étaient tout à fait gagnés aux sentiments chitiques" Yet Abú Muslim proceeded with caution and deliberation. For seven months he maintained his army in the neighbourhood of Merv without attempting any serious advance, and only when assured of the support of the Yamanite Arabs did he at length seize and occupy the capital of Khurásán. Then indeed the insurrection became general<sup>1</sup>

"They poured in from all sides to join Abú Muslim, from Herát, Búshanj, Marwarúdh, Tálaqán, Merv, Níshápúr, Sarakhs, Balkh, Sagháníyán, Tukhárístán, the country of the Khuttal, Kashsh, and Nasaf (Nakhshab)<sup>2</sup> They came all clothed in black, and carrying clubs half blackened which they called *káfir-kúb* (maces wherewith to beat the unbelievers)<sup>2</sup> They kept arriving on horse, on foot, on asses They urged on their asses with cries of '*harra Marwán*!' because Marwán II was surnamed 'the Ass (*al-Himár*)' They numbered about 100,000 men"

From this moment till Abu'l-'Abbás 'Abdu'lláh *as-Saffáh* (also entitled *al-Mahdí*), first Caliph of the House of 'Abbás, inaugurated his reign on October 30, A. D. 749, by pronouncing the *khutba*, or homily, customary on such occasions, the progress of Abú Muslim and the other 'Abbásid leaders was one continuous triumph. Nasr ibn Sayyár "le seul homme loyal, et qu'on est heureux de rencontrer dans ces temps des perfidie et d'égoïsme" died a fugitive at Sáwa in November, A. D. 748; Kúfa was occupied by Qahtaba in August, A. D. 749; in the same month Marwán's son 'Abdu'lláh was utterly routed on

<sup>1</sup> Van Vloten, *op laud*, p. 67, Dínawarí, p. 360

<sup>2</sup> It is noticeable that Dínawarí reads *kafar-kubat* Though *káfir* is the correct form, *kafar* is the recognised Persian pronunciation, as is shown by the words (*sar*, *bar*, &c) with which it is made to rhyme in Persian verses even of the earliest period.

the lesser Z'ib by Abu 'Awn, Marwān himself suffered final and irrevocable defeat on the river Z'ib on January 25, A D 750. Damascus, the Umayyad capital, was occupied three months later, and Marwān, last Caliph of the House of Umayyad, a fugitive in Egypt, was finally taken and slain on August 5th of the same year, and his head sent to Abu l 'Abbas. General massacres of members of the Umayyad family, accompanied in most cases by circumstances of inhuman cruelty and revolting treachery, took place in the following year (A D 751) in Palestine, at Basra, and even in the sacred cities of Mecca and Madinah. One, Abdu'r Rahmān, the grandson of Hishām, after many hairbreadth escapes, ultimately made his way to Spain, and, being well received by the Arabs there settled, founded the Umayyad dynasty of Cordova, which endured for nearly three centuries (A D 756-1031). The desecration of the tombs of the Umayyad Caliphs at Damascus, and the exhumation of their bodies, has also been cast as a reproach against the 'Abbāsids: but since this practice has been recently revived by an English general, and condoned if not applauded by the majority of his countrymen, it would hardly

Disill si  
of m y f the  
s ppo t rs of the  
evel tion

beseem us to denounce it too violently

In any case the 'Abbāsids, even when, wading through seas of blood, they had finally grasped the Caliphate and become sole and undisputed masters of the Eastern Empire of Islām, were very far from "filling the world with justice," so that we find a poet exclaiming—

*O would that the tyranny of the children of Mu*

*to us*

*And would that the justice of the children of*  
*hell fire!*

Many of those who had worked  
revolution were most bitterly disappointed  
accomplished fact. More

Muir op laud pp 43

Aghani xvi p 84

\* Van Vloten op laud 3 2,

the Shī'ites, who, misled by the delusive belief that by the term "Hāshimites," in whose name the propaganda was carried on, the House of 'Alī was intended, discovered, when it was too late, that not even in the Umayyads had the true descendants of the Prophet enemies more implacable than in their "Hāshimite" cousins of the House of 'Abbās. The 'Abbāsids did

Abu Salma and  
Abu Muslim put  
to death

not even spare their own chosen instruments, Abú Salma was treacherously murdered in

A.D. 749-750; and Abú Muslim himself, to whose untiring zeal, rare genius, and relentless activity the 'Abbāsīd triumph was chiefly due, suffered a like fate four or five years later (A.D. 755).<sup>1</sup> For him, indeed, in spite of his rare abilities, we can feel little pity, for on his own admission<sup>2</sup> the number of those whom he caused to be slain in cold blood, apart from those slain in battle, amounted to 100,000 persons, while by others<sup>3</sup> their number is raised to 600,000. Yet did

Immense influ-  
ence of Abu  
Muslim

he inspire in his followers a rare devotion, extending even to non-Muslims. "in his time," the historian tells us,<sup>4</sup> "the *dihqāns* [Persian landed proprietors] abandoned the religion of the Magians and were converted to Islām." Speaking of the Khurramīs, ultra-Shī'ites, and other exalted visionaries and syncretists, Van Vloten says<sup>5</sup> "Many of them regarded him as the only true Imām; it is even possible that he may have been considered as one of the descendants of Zoroaster, Oshêderbami, or Oshêderma, whose advent, in a rôle similar to that of the Muhammadan Mahdī, was expected by the Magians. These sects would not believe in the death of Abú Muslim, they awaited

<sup>1</sup> All the Imāms of the Shī'ite "Sect of the Twelve" who lived in 'Abbāsīd times are believed by their followers to have been put to death (generally secretly, by poison) by these Calīphs, with the exception of the twelfth, the Imām Mahdī, whom they believe to have been miraculously preserved till our own time in the mysterious City of Jābalqā, whence he will come forth in the "Trouble of the Last Time."

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ya'qúbī, vol. II, p. 439

<sup>3</sup> Muir, *op. laud.*, p. 446 *ad calc.*

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Abi Tahir, cited by Van Vloten, *op. laud.*, p. 67, and n. 4 *ad calc.*

<sup>5</sup> *Op. laud.*, p. 68

his return to fill the earth with justice. Others held that the Imámate passed to his daughter Fátima. A certain Isháq "the Turk" escaped into Transoxiana after the death of Abu Muslim, whose *dá'i* [missionary, or propagandist] he claimed to be, and maintained that his master was concealed in the city of Ray. Later he pretended to be a prophet sent by Zoroaster, who, according to him, had not ceased to live."

Of the Khurramis or Khurram dīniyya, whose essential tenets appear to have been those of Mazdak (see pp 168-172 *supra*),

we continue to hear for another century, and

The Khurram  
dīniyya.

the more or less serious revolts in Persia headed

by the pseudo-prophets Sinbādh the Magian

(A D 754-5), Ust'idhīs (A D 766-768), Yūsuf al Barm and

al Muqanna' "the veiled Prophet of Khurāsān" (A D 777-780),

'Alī Mazdak (A D 833), and Bābak (A D 816-838) were in

most cases associated with the memory of Abu Muslim.

If it did nothing else, however, the revolution which placed the 'Abbāsids on the throne entirely altered the status of the Persians, who at once rose from the position of a despised and slighted subject race to the highest and most influential offices and commands. (It was their swords which won the victory for the House of 'Abbās, whom al Biruni, not without good reason, calls "a Khurāsāni, an Eastern dynasty",<sup>2</sup> and it may truly be said that Qādisiyya and Nahāwand were avenged on the banks of the Zāb. The fall of the Umayyads was the end of the purely Arabian period<sup>3</sup>.)

As explained in the *Fihrist* (p 345) he was called the Turk only because he carried on his propaganda in the Turkish lands.

*Chronology of Ancient Nations* Sachau's transl p 197

<sup>2</sup> See the text (pp 69-70) and translation (pp 31-3) of the remarkable poem given by Von Hammer in his *Streifzug*. The Arab poet bitterly complains of the haughty arrogance assumed by the Persian and Nabatean *maulids* or clients who were formerly so humble.



**BOOK III**

*ON THE EARLY ABBASID PERIOD OR  
GOLDEN AGE OF ISLÁM*



## CHAPTER VII

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF ISLĀM  
(A.D. 749-847), FROM THE ACCESSION OF AS-SAFFĀH  
TO THE DEATH OF AL WĀTHIQ

THE general characteristics of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty, and the nature of the forces which contributed to its establishment and the overthrow of the Umayyads, have been to

G t ha  
t t cs f th  
abbas d p n d. some extent discussed in the last chapter {Sir William Muir, in the short introductory remarks

which he prefixes to his account of this illustrious house (*op laud*, pp 430-432) emphasises three features in particular wherein this period differs from the last, firstly,

Ch t rised by  
Sir W Muir that the Caliphate was no longer coextensive with the limits of Islām (since Spain never accepted

'Abbāsīd rule, and the allegiance of Africa was fitful and imperfect) secondly, that the martial vigour of the Arabs declined along with their fervent faith, and that they ceased to play the predominant *role* in the history of Islām, thirdly, that Persian, and later Turkish, influences became all powerful at the centre of government, now transferred from Syria to 'Irāq

With the rise of Persian influence he adds (p 432) the roughness of Arab life was softened and there opened an era of culture toleration and scientific research The practice of oral tradition was also giving place to recorded statement and historical narrative—a change hastened by the scholarly tendencies introduced from the East To the same source may be attributed the ever

increasing laxity at Court of manners and morality, and also those transcendental views that now sprung up of the divine Imámate, or spiritual leadership, of some member of the House of 'Alí, as well as the rapid growth of free thought. These things will be developed as we go on. But I have thought it well to draw attention at this point to the important changes wrought by the closer connection of the Caliphate with Persia and Khurásán caused by the accession of the 'Abbásids."

In a similar strain Dozy writes<sup>1</sup>

"The ascendancy of the Persians over the Arabs, that is to say of the conquered over the victors, had already for a long while been in course of preparation, it became  
 Characterised by Dozy complete when the 'Abbásids, who owed their elevation to the Persians, ascended the throne. These princes made it a rule to be on their guard against the Arabs, and to put their trust only in foreigners, Persians,<sup>2</sup> especially those of Khurásán, with whom, therefore, they had to make friends. The most distinguished personages at court were consequently Persians. The famous Barmecides were descended from a Persian noble who had been superintendent of the Fire-temple at Balkh Afshín, the all-powerful favourite of the Caliph al-Mu'tasim, was a scion of the princes of Ustrúshna in Transoxiana. The Arabs, it is true, murmured, and endeavoured to regain their ancient preponderance. The war which broke out between the two brothers al-Amín and al-Ma'mún, the sons of Hárúnu'r-Rashíd, was in its essence merely the renewal of the war waged between the Arab and Persian nationalities for the supremacy. But the Arabs again experienced a check, again, cost them what it might, they had to recognise the supremacy of Persia, again they were compelled to watch as passive spectators a change of government dependent on the defeat of one of these races by the other and resulting from it. The democratic point of view of the Arabs was, indeed, replaced by the despotic ideas of the Persians."

"Know," says that charming historian al-Fakhri,<sup>3</sup> "that the 'Abbásid dynasty was a treacherous, wily, and faithless dynasty, wherein intrigue and guile played a greater part  
 Characterised by al Fakhri than strength and energy, particularly in its latter days. Indeed the later rulers of this House lost

all faculty of energy and courage and relied solely on tricks and stratagems To this effect speaks the poet Ibn Iushajim alluding to the truce observed by the people of the sword and the hostility and enmity of the people of the pen one to another —

*Pleasant to the people of the sword be that idleness  
 Wherby their days are passed in self-indulgence !  
 How many a man is there amongst them who lives a tranquil  
 life and has never stirred forth  
 To any war nor ever attacked a resolute and equal adversary !  
 Evening and morning he struts about girding to his sword-belt  
 A sword secure from serious work which has never risked  
 fracture  
 But as for the people of the pen at no moment  
 Are their swords dry of blood*

In the same strain sang a certain poet when al Mutawakkil slew his minister Muhammad b Abdul Malik az Zayyat —

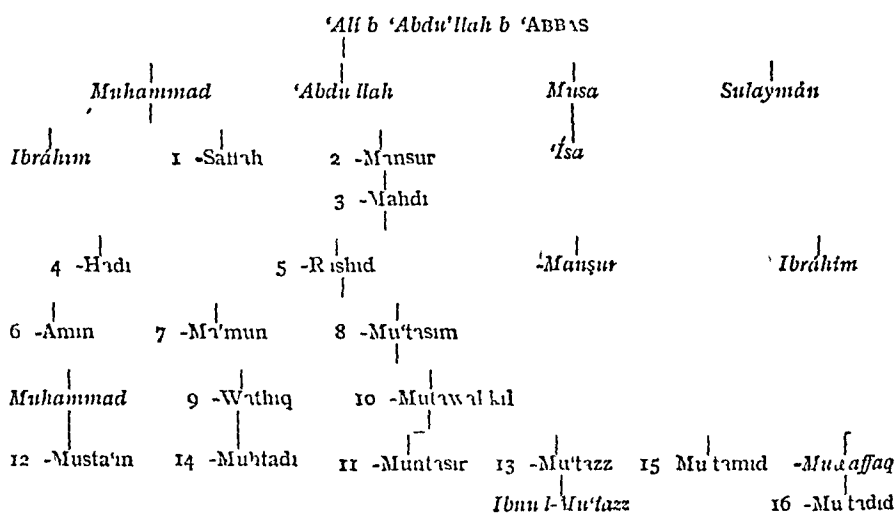
*The heart was like to leave me for distress  
 When it was said 'The Warrior is slain !'  
 O Commander of the Faithful thou hast slain one  
 Who was the axle on which your mill revolved !  
 Gently O sons of al Ibbās gently !  
 For in truth men's hearts burn at your treachery !*

{ Yet withal it was a dynasty abounding in good qualities richly endowed with generous attributes wherein the wares of Science found a ready sale the merchandise of Culture was in great demand the observances of Religion were respected charitable bequests flowed freely the world was prosperous the Holy Shrines were well cared for and the frontiers were bravely kept Nor did this state of things cease until its last days were at hand and violence became general government was disturbed and empire passed from them all of which will be set forth in its proper place if God please >

As it is not my intention to discuss in detail the reigns or characters of the Caliphs of this House, or to repeat anecdotes of Hārūn ar Rashīd's nocturnal rambles through

Abul Fath Mahmūd b al Husayn b Shahaq called *as-Sindi* because of his Indian descent died 961 or 971 See Brockelmann's *Arab Literaturgesch* p 85, and p 371 *infra*

the streets of Baghdad in the company of Ja'far the Barmecide and Masrúr the black' executioner, which are familiar to all readers of the *Thousand and One Nights*, and of which a copious selection will be found in the late Professor Palmer's entertaining little volume on that celebrated monarch,<sup>1</sup> I here append, for the convenience of the reader, a table of the 'Abbásid Calíphs of this earlier period, adapted from Stanley Lane-Poole's excellent *Muhammadan Dynasties* (London, 1894).



The first century of the dynasty, from its establishment till the death of al-Wáthiq and accession of al-Mutawakkil (A H 132-232 = A D 750-847), will chiefly be dealt with in this Third Book. It is the Golden Age of the Caliphate, and is characterised by the ascendancy of Persian influence, typified in the celebrated and noble Barmecides (descendants of Barmak), by the wit and learning so much in fashion at the Court, and by the complete dominance of the broad and liberal Mu'tazilite doctrines in the field of religion. With the accession of the tenth Caliph, al-Mutawakkil, Turkish influences (always somewhat barbarous in many aspects, and seldom favourable to free thought and enlightened intellec-

<sup>1</sup> New Plutarch series, *Haroun Alaschid*, London, 1881.

tuality) largely displaced Persian, the Mu'tazilite doctrine, no longer patronised by Royalty, was supplanted by what now passes current as orthodoxy, to the great detriment of philosophical speculation and for a time a violent anti Shi'ite bias was displayed. This earlier period of the 'Abbásid Caliphate is therefore well defined, both in respect to racial dominance and religious tendencies, and reached its culminating point in the splendid reign of al Mamun, whose mother<sup>1</sup> and wife<sup>2</sup> were both Persians, and whose ministers, favourites, and personal characteristics were, for the most part, Persian also. "We have seen," says Professor Palmer, "how the Arabs perforce left the actual administration of the conquered countries in the hands of native officials. The 'Abbásids owing their rise entirely to Persian influence, it was only natural that Persian counsels should prevail, and we accordingly find a minister of Persian extraction at the head of affairs, and the Caliphate carried on by almost precisely the same machinery as that by which the Empire of the Sásánians was governed."

To this machinery belonged, amongst other things, the office of *Wazir* (of which "Vizier" is the commoner, though less correct, form in English books), a word commonly derived from the Arabic root *wizr* "a burden," because the *Wazir* bears the burden of administration, but probably identical in reality, as Darmesteter has shown,<sup>3</sup> with the Pahlawi *vi chlr* (from *vi chird*, "to

Much says von Kremer (*Cult Streifzüge* p 41 *ad calc*) is explained by the circumstance that Mamun's mother was a Persian, a statement which is found in an ancient and well informed author (de Goeje *Fragm Hist Arab* I 350).

Puran the daughter of Hasan b Sahl and niece of the celebrated Fadl b Sahl al Mamun's *wa'ir*. The gorgeous ceremonies observed in connection with her marriage are detailed by Ibn Khallikan (de Slane's translation vol I pp 268-70) and in the *Lafá'if al Ma'arif* of ath Tha'alibi (ed de Jong pp 73-74).

<sup>3</sup> *Etudes iraniennes* vol I p 58 and n 3 *ad calc*.

decide”), *gazīr* in the Talmud. Of the history of this office al-Fakhri<sup>1</sup> gives the following account

“Before entering more fully into this matter, we must needs say a few prefatory words on this subject. I say, then, that the *Wazīr* is one who is intermediate between the king and his subjects, so there must needs be in his nature one aspect which accords with the natures of kings, and another aspect which accords with the natures of the common folk, so that he may deal with both classes in such a manner as to secure for himself acceptance and affection, while trustworthiness and sincerity constitute his capital. It is said, ‘When the ambassador plays the traitor, policy avails naught,’ and it is also said, ‘The man belied hath no opinion,’<sup>2</sup> so it is important for him to be efficient and vigorous, and necessary that he should possess intelligence, wariness, cunning, and resolution. It is likewise needful that he should be generous and hospitable, that thereby he may incline men’s necks to his yoke, and that his thanks may be on the tongues of all, nor can he dispense with gentleness, patience, stability in affairs, clemency, dignity, gravity, and an authoritative address. Now the rules of the *Wazīrate* were not fixed, nor the laws which govern it set in order, before the dynasty of the ‘Abbāsids. Before that time its rules were indeterminate and its laws unsettled, nay, rather each king was surrounded by certain courtiers and retainers, and, when any important crisis arose, he took counsel of such as were most sagacious and wise in council, each of whom, therefore, acted as *Wazīr*. But when the ‘Abbasids came to the throne, the laws of the *Wazīrate* were fixed, and the *Wazīr* was named *Wazīr*, having hitherto been entitled Secretary (*Katib*), or Counsellor (*Mushir*). Lexicographers say that *wazar* means ‘a place of refuge,’ ‘an asylum,’ and that *wizi* means ‘burden,’ so that *Wazīr* is either derived from *wizi*, in which case it means that he ‘bears the burden,’ or from *wazai*, in which case it means that the king has recourse to his judgment and counsel.”

But the office of *Wazīr*, for all the power and dignity which it carried with it, was a perilous one. Abū Muslim, entitled *Aminu Ahl Muhammad*, “the Trusted Agent of the Family of Muhammad,” was,

Perilous character of the office

<sup>1</sup> Ed Ahlwardt, pp 179-181

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, No heed is paid to the views or statements of one who has been proved a liar

as we have seen, treacherously murdered by al Mansur (A D 754-755), after he himself had, by order of ٱṣ-Ṣaffáh, caused Abu Salíma, who first bore the title of Wazír, to be assassinated (A D 749-750) Abul Jahm, who succeeded him, was poisoned by his master. Feeling the poison work within him, he rose up to leave the room. "Whither away?" asked the Caliph. "To where thou hast sent me," answered the unfortunate minister. His death coincided with the rise to power of the great and noble Persian family of the Barmecides, or descendants of Barmak, who for fifty years (A D 752-804) so wisely directed the affairs of the Caliphate, and, by their generous patronage of learning, lavish hospitality, and wise administration, conferred such lustre upon the reigns of the first five 'Abbásid Calíphs, till the insensate jealousy of Hárunu r Rashid led him to destroy Ja'far and al Fadl, the sons of Yahyá, the son of Khálid, the son of Barmak, and many members of their family. Barmak, their ancestor, was a Magian, and the high priest or the great Fire Temple of Nawbahár at Balkh. Mas'udi tells us (*Murúju dh Dhabab*, iv, 48) that—

He who exercised these functions was respected by the kings of this country and administered the wealth offered to the temple. He was called *Barmak* a name given to all those invested with this dignity whence is derived the name of the Barmecides (*Barmakí* pl *Barámika*) for Khálid b Barmak was the son of one of these great pontiffs.

In support of this view that Barmak was really a title rather than a name we may also cite the words of the geographer al Qazwíní (*Athdru l Bilád*, pp 221-222, sv, Balkh) —

The Persians and Turks used to revere it [the Temple of Nawbahar] and perform pilgrimages to it and present offerings to it. Its length was one hundred cubits its breadth the same and its

neight somewhat more, and the care of it was invested in the *Barámika*. The Kings of India and China used to come to it, and when they reached it they worshipped the idol, and kissed Barmak's hand, and Barmak's rule was paramount in all these lands. And they ceased not, Barmak after Barmak, until Khurásán was conquered in the days of 'Uthmán b 'Affán, and the guardianship of the temple came at length to Barmak the father of Khálid."

The Barmecides naturally used their great influence in favour of their compatriots, but they had to be careful lest a too evident partiality for the institutions of Persia should bring them under suspicion of being still at heart Magians. Thus, whilst engaged in constructing his new capital of Baghdad, the Caliph al-Mansúr was advised by Abú Ayyúb al-Múriyání to destroy the Sásánian palace known as *Ayván-i-Kisrá*, and utilise the material for building purposes. He consulted Khálid b Barmak, who replied, "Do not this thing, O Commander of the Faithful, for verily it is a sign of the triumph of Islám, for when men see it they know that only a heavenly dispensation could destroy the like of this building, besides which it was the place of prayer of 'Alí b. Abú Tálíb. The expense of destroying it is, moreover, greater than what will be gained thereby." "O Khálid," answered al-Mansúr, "thou hast naught but partiality for all that is Persian!" Khálid's prophecy as to the labour and expense involved in its destruction proved, however, to be correct, and so one day the Caliph said to him, "O Khálid, we have come over to thine opinion, and have abandoned the destruction of the palace." "O Commander of the Faithful," said Khálid, "I advise thee now to destroy it, lest men should say that thou wert unable to destroy what another built!" Fortunately, however, the Caliph again refused to follow his advice (given, no doubt, from prudential motives, on account of what the Caliph had said to him before), and the demolition of the palace was suspended.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Fakhrí, pp 185, 186, Tabarí, ser III, p. 320

Another old Persian custom reintroduced very early in the 'Abbásid period was the observance of the Festival of the New Year (*Nawruz*), the first day of the Persian solar year, corresponding with the vernal equinox and the entry of the sun into the sign of Aries

'In the time of Harunur Rashid says al Biruni the land holders assembled again and called on Yahya the son of Khalid the son of Barmak asking him to postpone the Nawruz by about two months Yahya intended so to do but then his enemies began to speak of the subject and said He is partial to Zoroastrianism So he dropped the subject and the matter remained as it was before

Von Kremer, in those admirable works which we have already so often had occasion to cite, treats fully of the Persian influences which were everywhere active, and which so largely moulded not only the organisation of the Church and State, but, in 'Abbásid times, even the fashions of dress, food, music and the like

Persian influence he says<sup>3</sup> increased at the Court of the Caliphs and reached its zenith under al Hadí Harunur Rashid and al Mamun Most of the ministers of the last were Persians or of Persian extraction In Baghdad Persian fashions continued to enjoy an increasing ascendancy The old Persian festival of the Nawruz Mihrgan and Ram were celebrated Persian raiment was the official court dress and the tall black conical Persian hats (*qalansuwa* pl *qaláms*) were already prescribed as official by the second Abbasid Caliph (in A H 153 = A D 770) At the court the customs of the Sasanian kings were imitated and garments decorated with golden inscriptions were introduced which it was the exclusive privilege of the ruler to bestow A coin of the Caliph al Mutawakkil shows us this Prince actually clothed in true Persian fashion

*Chronology of Ancient Nations* (Sachau's trans) p 37

The abolition of the old system of intercalation having caused it to recede so that it fell at a time before the crops were ripe thus causing much loss to the farmers since the taxes had to be paid at this time

<sup>3</sup> *Sirásif uge* pp 32-33

But if Persian influences were thus dominant at the 'Abbásid court, and Persian fashions thus prevalent amongst its frequenters, the activity of this talented people was even more conspicuous in the realm of literature and science.

"Not only in the government are the foreigners always to the front," says Goldziher in the illuminating chapter *'Arab und 'Ajam* (Arabs and Persians) in his *Muhammedanische Studien* (vol 1, p 109), "we find them also in the foremost ranks even in the specifically religious sciences 'It almost seems,' says von Kremer,<sup>1</sup> that these scientific studies (Reading and Exegesis of the Qur'án, Sciences of Tradition and Law), were, during the first two centuries [of the *hijra*], principally worked by clients [*Mawálí*, i.e., non-Arab Muslims], while the Arabs proper felt themselves more drawn to the study of their ancient poetry, and to the development and imitation of the same, but, we would add, even in this field they were often outstripped by the foreigners, whose men of learning in no small degree advanced this sphere of the Arabian genius by literary and historical studies on the antiquities of the Arabs, by thorough critical researches, and so forth. It would be superfluous to cite here the many names whereof the mere sound affords proof of what Arabic Grammar and Lexicology owe to non-Arabs, and even if we cannot permit Paul de Lagarde's assertion<sup>2</sup> that 'of the Muhammadans who have achieved anything in Science, not one was a Semite' to pass in this absolute form, yet so much at least may be said, that alike in the specially religious studies as in those which grew up round the study of the Arabic speech, the Arabian element lagged far behind the non-Arabian. And this was principally the fault of the Arabs themselves. They looked down with sovereign contempt on the studies so zealously prosecuted by the non-Arabs, considering that such trivialities were unworthy of men who could boast so proud an ancestry, but befitted only the pedagogue, anxious to gloss over with such pigments his dingy genealogy. 'It befits not the Qurayshites'—in such words a full-blooded Arab expresses himself—to go deeply into any study save that of the old histories [of the Arabs], especially now, when one has to bend the bow and attack the enemy.'<sup>3</sup> Once a Qurayshite,

<sup>1</sup> *Cultugesch. Skizzen*, p 16

<sup>2</sup> *Gesammelte Abhandl.*, p 8, n 4

<sup>3</sup> Cited from the *Kitabu l-Bayan wa't-Tabyin* of al-Jáhidh. This work has now been printed at Cairo (A.H. 1313=A.D. 1895-6), but Goldziher used it in manuscript, as he wrote in or before 1889. He also refers to the

observing an Arab child studying the Book of Sibawayhi could not refrain from exclaiming Fie upon thee! That is the learning of schoolmasters and the pride of beggars! For it was reckoned as a jest that any one who was a grammarian prosodist accountant or jurist (for the science last mentioned arithmetic is indispensable) would give instruction in these subjects to little children for sixty *dirhams* (for what length of time is not unfortunately mentioned)

The Arabs of the *Jdhilyyat*, or pagan time, were, as Goldziher fully shows, so little familiar with the art of writing (save in the case of those who had come under Jewish, Christian, Greek, or Persian influences) that an old poet distinguishes a wise man from whom he cites a sentence as "he who dictates writing on parchment, whereon the scribe writes it down and that even in the Prophet's time they were not much more literate is shown, as he says, not only by the strange materials on which the Qur'an was inscribed, but also by the fact that those taken captive at the Battle of Badr could, if they possessed a knowledge of writing, obtain their liberty without paying any further ransom Al Wáqidí, cited by al Baládhurí (*Futúhu'l Buldán*, ed de Goeje, pp 471-72), expressly states that in the early days of Islám only seventeen men of the tribe of Quraysh, the aristocracy of Meccá, could write, and he enumerates them by name, including amongst them 'Umar, 'Alí, 'Uthmá'n, Ibnul Jarrá'h, Talha, Abu Sufyán, and his son Mu'áwiyá Dhur Rumma, who is regarded as the last of the old Bedouin poets (died between A D 719 and 735), had to conceal the fact that he was able to write,<sup>2</sup> "because, said he, "it is regarded as a disgrace amongst us

similar narratives from other sources given by von Kremer in vol II of his *Gesammelte Werke* p 159

This celebrated Persian grammarian died about A D 795. His work — the oldest systematic representation of Arabian Grammar — is called The Book (*al Kítáb*) for excellence Goldziher *Muham Stud* vol I p 112

La k literary  
tend des  
am g t th  
pure Arabs.

The Persians, on the other hand, even in early Sásánian times, included a knowledge of writing (*dapīrīh*) amongst the accomplishments proper to a prince,<sup>1</sup> and many of them seem to have also possessed a good knowledge of Arabic before the days of Islám. Thus King Bahrá́m Gúr (A.D. 420-438), who was educated by Mundhír amongst the Arabs of Híra, was instructed in the Persian, Arabic, and even Greek languages and writings,<sup>2</sup> and poems in Arabic ascribed to him are cited in 'Awfī's *Lubábu'l-Albá́b*.<sup>3</sup> Khurra-Khusiaw, the Persian satrap of Yemen about the time of the Prophet, "became fully Arabised, he recited Arabic poems, and educated himself in the Arabian fashion; these Arab tendencies of his ('*ta'arubuhu*' says our source) were the primary cause of his recall"<sup>4</sup>

"There are also named," continues Goldziher, "amongst the doctors of the religion of Islám men of Persian origin whose ancestors did not through Islám first come in contact with Arab life, but who belonged to those Persian troops<sup>5</sup> who, under Sayf b Dhú Yazan, became settled in Arabian lands. In Islám the Arabisation of the non-Arabian elements and their participation in the learned world of the Muhammadan community underwent a rapid development, to which the history of the civilisation of mankind affords but few parallels. Towards the end of the first century [of the *hijra*] we find in Madína a grammarian named Bushkast, a name which sounds altogether Persian, and we find this grammarian, who busied himself with imparting instruction in his science,

<sup>1</sup> Noldeke's *Gesch. des Artachshun-i-Papakan*, p. 38, and n. 3 *ad calc.*

<sup>2</sup> Noldeke's *Gesch. d. Sasaniden*, pp. 86-88, *Dinawari*, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Of the two MSS. of this rare work known to exist, one is in the Berlin Library, while the other till lately belonged to Lord Crawford, who most generously allowed the writer to borrow it for a protracted period. In August, 1901, it was sold with his other Oriental MSS. to Mrs. Rylands of Manchester, and is now in the John Rylands Library.

<sup>4</sup> Goldziher, *op. cit.*, p. 113. In a footnote he adds, "Fíruz ad-Daylamí (died in the Caliphate of 'Uthmán), who belonged to the Prophet's time, is also to be mentioned. Cf. Ibn Qutayba (ed. Wustenfeld), p. 170."

<sup>5</sup> Goldziher, *loc. cit.*, n. 2 *ad calc.* Concerning these *Banu'l-Ahmar* ("Sons of the Nobles"), he refers to the *Kitabu'l-Aghani*, xvi, p. 76, Ibn Hishám's *Life of the Prophet*, pp. 44-46, and Noldeke's *Gesch. d. Sasaniden*, p. 223.

playing a conspicuous part in the Kharijite rebellion of Abu Hamza in consequence of which participation he was put to death by Marwan's adherents who succeeded in getting him into their hands. A whole series of the most eminent Muhammadans was descended from Persian prisoners of war. The grandsire of Abu Ishāq whose Biography of the Prophet is one of the principal sources for the history of early Islam was Yasar a Persian prisoner of war so likewise was the father of Abu Musa b. Nusayr who thrust himself into prominence in Andalusia while the fathers and grandfathers of many other men distinguished in politics learning and literature were Persian and Turkish prisoners of war who were affiliated [*as mawālī* or clients] to some Arab tribe and who by their thoroughly Arabian *nisba* almost cast into oblivion their foreign origin. But the retention of the remembrance of their foreign origin is not altogether excluded in the case of such Arab clients [*mawālī*] even though it be not exactly common. The Arab poet Abu Ishāq Ibrahim as-Sulī (d. A.D. 857) retained in this his family name *as-Sulī* the remembrance of his ancestor Šol takin a chief of Khurāsān conquered and deprived of his throne by Yazid b. al-Muhallab. Converted to Islam he became one of the most devoted partisans of his conqueror. On the arrow which he shot against the troops of the Caliph he is said to have written the words: Šol summons you to follow the Book of God and the *Sunna* of his Prophet. From this Turk the celebrated Arabic poet was descended."

The whole of this chapter in Goldziher's masterly work is profoundly instructive, and to it we refer the reader for fuller information on this matter. Amongst the most striking illustrations which he gives<sup>3</sup> of the preponderating influence of these foreign *Mawālī* is a dialogue between the Umayyad Caliph 'Abdul Malik and the famous theologian az-Zuhri, whence it appears that alike in Mecca, Yaman, Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Khurāsān, Kufa, and Basra foreign "clients

Al Baladhuri (p. 247) as Goldziher remarks gives a list of such men conspicuous amongst whom are the four sons of Šahrin.

On the Arabic forms given to Persian proper names see Goldziher *op. cit.* p. 133 n. 2 *ad calc.* Thus *Mādhān* becomes *Mādhān* and *Basfīrūy* *Abu Sufra* while in one case the name of the Persian Prophet Zoroaster is replaced by that of the Arabian Prophet Muhammad.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* vol. 1 pp. 114, 115.

held the chief positions of authority in religion. And when the Caliph expressed his amazement at this state of things, the theologian replied, "So it is, O Commander of the Faithful! This is effected by the Command of God and His Religion; who observes these attains to authority, who neglects them goes under"

The tendency of pious Muslims of the early period, as expressed in numerous traditions, was, as Goldziher also points out, to supply the strongest authority for disregarding racial prejudices in the domain of religion. Amongst these traditions are the following .

"O man, forsooth God is one God, and the ancestor of all mankind is one, the religion is the same religion, the Arabic speech is neither father nor mother to any one of you, it is naught else but a speech. He who speaks Arabic is thereby an Arab"<sup>1</sup>

"He of [the people of] Pars who accepts Islām is [as good as] a Qurayshite"

"Did Faith reside in the Pleiades, yet would men of this people [the Persians] reach it", a tradition afterwards modified as follows "Were knowledge suspended to the ends of heaven, yet would a section of the people in Párs reach it"<sup>2</sup>

That the full-blooded Arabs, in whom racial feeling greatly outweighed the religious sense, were very far from sharing the views embodied in these and similar traditions is abundantly shown by Goldziher, who cites many facts and passages which indicate their contempt for the foreign *Mawālī*, and in particular their disapproval of marriages between Arabs (especially Arab women) and non-Arabs<sup>3</sup>. A precisely similar phenomenon is presented at the present day by the English in India, who are no more disposed to accord social equality to a

<sup>1</sup> Goldziher regards this tradition, cited on the authority of Ibn 'Asákū (A.D. 1106-1169), as of late fabrication, but as embodying an idea undoubtedly prevalent in earlier times

<sup>2</sup> *Op cit*, vol 1, pp 117-146

<sup>3</sup> That this already existed in pre-Islamic times is shown by the refusal of Nu'mán, King of Hira, and his courtiers to give one of their daughters in marriage even to their powerful suzerain, the King of Persia

Christian than to a non Christian native, but rather the contrary, indeed, the comparison here is on the whole to the advantage of Islām, where at least the professedly pious steadily opposed this dominant racial prejudice in a way very rare amongst our missionaries—a fact which, without doubt, accounts for their slender success in most parts of Asia

With the fall of the Umayyads and the rise of the "Persian and Khuras'īnian" dynasty of the 'Abbāsids there came true, as has been already sufficiently indicated, part at least of Nasr b Sayyār's warning to his master Marwān "the Ass" —

*Fa firri an rihālikī ihumma qullī  
Alal Islāmī wal Arabī s salamu l*

Flee from thine abode and bid farewell to Islam and the Arabs!

There now appears on the scene a definite party, the *Shu'ubīyya*, or "partisans of the Gentiles," who, beginning with the contention that all Muslims were equal, finished in some cases by declaring the Arabs inferior to many other races. "Already under the Caliph Abu Ja'far al Mansur," says Goldziher (*op cit*, p 148), "we are witnesses of how the Arab waits vainly for entrance before the Caliph's Gate, while men of Khurāsān freely go in and out through it, and mock the rude Arab." The poet Abu Tammīm († A D 845-46) was rebuked by the Wazīr, because he had compared the Caliph to Hātim of the tribe of Tayy and other personages in whom the Arabs gloried, with the words, "Dost thou

Goldziher *op cit* 1 p 148 Cf p 47 *supra*

To this party Goldziher devotes two chapters of his remarkable book (vol 1 pp 147-16 and 7) The word *shu'ub* (pl of *sha'b*) is used for the nations of the Gentiles (*Ajam*) as opposed to the tribes (*qabīl*) of the Arabs in reference to Qur'an xlv 13 *O men! verily We have created you from a male and a female and have made you nations and tribes that ye might recognise that the noblest of you in God's sight is he amongst you who most fears God verily God is All knowing and Informed*

compare the Commander of the Faithful with these barbarous Arabs ?”<sup>1</sup>

Of these *Shu‘ūbiyya* each one vaunted particularly the claims to distinction of his own nationality, whether Syrian, Nabathæan, Egyptian, Greek, Spanish, or Persian, but the last named were at once the most vehement and the most numerous. In Umayyad times Isma‘īl b. Yāsār was, by order of the Caliph Hishām (A D 724-43), thrown into a tank of water because he had boasted his Persian descent in verses amongst which occur the following. <sup>2</sup>

*“Princes were my ancestors, noble satraps, of high breeding, generous,  
hospitable,  
Comparable to Khusraw or Shāpūr, and to Hurmuzān in renown  
and consideration,  
Lions of the war-hosts, when they rushed forth on the day of  
battle.  
They disheartened the Kings of the Turks and Greeks, they stalked  
in heavy coats of mail  
As ravenous lions stalk forth  
Then, if thou askest, wilt thou learn that we are descended from  
a race which excels all others”*

Such boasts on the part of the Persian *Mawāll* were gall and wormwood to the Arab party, who would fain have enjoyed a monopoly of this sort of self-glorification, and, when they could do no more, they replied by such verses as these. <sup>3</sup>

*“God so ordained it that I knew you ere Fortune smiled upon you,  
when ye still sat in the Haymarket,  
But not a year had elapsed ere I saw you strutting about in silk  
and brocade and samite  
Then your women sat in the sun and moaned under the water-  
wheels in harmony with the turtle-doves  
Now they trail skirts of flowered silk from the looms of ‘Irāq, and  
all kinds of silk stuffs from Dakn and Tārin*

<sup>1</sup> Goldziher, *op cit*, p 148

<sup>2</sup> Von Kremer, *Steifzüge*, p 30

<sup>3</sup> *Steifzüge*, pp 31-32 and 69-70

They have already forgotten how but a little while since they  
broke Halāni stones in the quarries and how they carried  
bundles of moss in the skirts of their frocks  
But when they had grown rich then spoke they with impudent  
falsehood We are the noble ones the sons of the Dihqāns

\* \* \*  
If one questions the meanest and commonest of them he answers  
full of arrogance I am a son of [Bahrdm] Chubīn  
Adding thereto Khusrāw endowed me with goods and made me  
his inheritor who dares to set himself up against me?

The Persian aristocracy of this period, as we learn from  
al-Mis'udi,<sup>1</sup> preserved their genealogies with the same care  
as did the Arabs, so that these boasts which so offended the  
Arabs may in many cases have been well founded. Even in  
the genealogies of the Arabs they were better instructed than  
the Arabs themselves, as we see in the anecdote cited by Gold-  
ziher (*op cit*, p. 190), when a Quryshite is obliged to appeal  
to a Persian for information about his own ancestors. The  
Persians on their side were quick to seize and turn into ridicule  
the weak points of the Arabs, and even, as Goldziher remarks,<sup>2</sup>  
belittle those virtues (such as liberality) whereon they  
secretly prided themselves so that, for example, one of  
Ma'mun's three Persian librarians named Sahl b. Hārūn,  
a natural Shu'ubī was pleased to write a number of treatises  
lingering avarice.<sup>3</sup> The blind Persian panegyrist of the Caliph  
ahdī, Bashshār b. Burd,<sup>4</sup> a well known freethinker, who  
ultimately put to death for his heterodoxy in A.D. 783-84,  
reached so far as to say —  
*Earth is dark and the Fire resplendent and the Fire has been  
adored since it became Fire*

<sup>1</sup> *al-Dihāb* (ed B de Mevriard) II 41 cited by Goldziher  
<sup>2</sup> *Loc cit*  
<sup>3</sup> of the same kind the *Kitāb al-Bi-khald* or Book of Misers  
by the celebrated al-Jahūdh (another *Shu'ubī* of Goldziher  
57) has been recently published at Leyden by Dr Van Vloten  
<sup>4</sup> *Translation of Ibn Khallikān* vol I pp 54-57 Brockel  
<sup>5</sup> *Arab Lit* vol I pp 73 74 and von Kremer's  
34 et seqq

For our knowledge of the Shu'úbí controversy and the literature which it evoked, of which echoes only are preserved in the works of al-Jáhidh († A.D. 869) and Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi († A.D. 940), we are chiefly indebted to Goldziher's excellent *Muhammedanische Studien*, already so freely cited in this chapter. Amongst the defenders of the Persian pretensions he enumerates Isháq b. Hassán al-Khurramí († A.D. 815-16), a native of Sughd, who, in one of his verses, boasts<sup>1</sup> that his father is Sásán, and Kísrá, son of Hurmuz, and the Kháqán his cousins; Abú 'Uthmán Sa'íd b. Humayd b. Bakhtagán († A.D. 854-5), who composed books on the superiority of the Persians over the Arabs,<sup>2</sup> Abú Sa'íd ar-Rustamí (tenth century of our era), "in whom," says Goldziher, "the national cry of the Persians against the Arabs sounds its last notes;" and that great scientist, Abú Rayhán al-Bíruní († A.D. 1048). Amongst the most notable of their opponents, the champions of Arab superiority, are enumerated the historians Ibn Qutayba († A.D. 883 or 889) and al-Baládhurí († A.D. 892),<sup>3</sup> both of whom were of Persian origin,<sup>4</sup> although they wrote exclusively in Arabic. To them may be added a Persian-writing Persian of a later epoch, Násir-i-Khusraw, the poet, traveller, and Isma'ílí propagandist († circ. A.D. 1074), who in his *Diwán* (lith. ed. of Tabríz, A.H. 1280, p. 150), says:

*Bí-dín kaíd fakhr án-kí lá rúz-i-hashr*  
*Bidú muftakhr shud 'Aíab bar 'Ajam*  
*Khasís ast u bí qadr bí-dín, agar*  
*Farídún-sh khál-ast, u Jamshíd 'am.*

"'Twas in Religion that he gloried by whom till the Day of Judgement

The Arabs excel the Persians in glory

He who lacks religion is ignoble and mean,

Though Ferídún be his maternal, and Jamshíd his paternal uncle"

<sup>1</sup> Goldziher, *op cit*, p. 163

<sup>2</sup> *Fihrist*, p. 123

<sup>3</sup> Goldziher, *op cit*, p. 166

<sup>4</sup> Brockelmann, *Gesch d Arab Lit*, vol. 1, pp. 120 and 141

The *Shu'ubiyya* controversy extended itself, as Goldziher also shows, to the regions of Genealogy and Philology, wherein lay the special pride of the Arabs, who valued nothing more highly than nobility of descent and purity of speech. Even into these fields the "Iranophiles" carried their attacks, using their knowledge in the first to rake up all the scandals connected with the different Arab tribes and the pedigrees of their favourite heroes and warriors—scandals which were embodied in a whole series of incriminating poems called *Mathalib*—and in the second to vindicate the superiority of other languages, notably the Persian and the Greek, over Arabic. To one of the most accomplished of these "Iranophile" scholars, Abu 'Ubayda Ma'mar b al Muthanná († circ A D 824), Goldziher devotes a long notice :

√ This most learned philologist, notorious as a *Shu'ubi*, was always eager to point out how much, even of what they most prized, and esteemed most national and original, the Arabs really owed to other nations—how much, for example, their poetry and rhetoric owed to Persian models, how many of their stories were drawn from Persian sources, and the like. The superior attractions of the Persian legends had, indeed, as we learn from Ibn Hishám (ed Wustenfeld, pp 235-6), already caused the greatest vexation to the Prophet, who found his audiences melt away when an *Nadr b al Hārith al 'Abdarī* appeared on the scene to tell them tales of *Rustam* and *Isfandiyar* and the ancient kings of Persia.

As regards Philology proper, Goldziher specially mentions as champions of the Arab cause the great commentator az Zamakhsharī (also a Persian † A D 1143-4), who in his preface thanks God for his learning in, and enthusiasm for, the Arabic language, and his exemption from *Shu'ubi* tendencies. Ibn Durayd († A D 933) and Abul Husayn b Fāris (early eleventh century). Amongst their most notable opponents he reckons *Hamza of Isfahan*, who "was enthusiastic for the

Persians,"<sup>1</sup> and who shows his enthusiasm, amongst other ways, by finding Persian etymologies (rarely satisfactory) for names generally regarded as purely Arabic. Thus he explained the name of the town of Basia as "*Bas rdh*" ("Far Road," or "Many Roads"); an etymology which reminds us of the statement in that late and greatly overestimated Persian work the *Dabistân* (see pp. 54-55 *supra*), that the original name of Mecca was "*Mah-gah*," which in Persian signifies "the Place of the Moon." Such childish etymologies are, unfortunately, only too popular with Persian writers down to the present day.<sup>2</sup>

The way in which the different sciences, especially History, arose amongst the Muslims in connection with the study of the Qur'ân, and grouped themselves, as it were, round a theological kernel, is admirably sketched by that great Arabist, Professor de Goeje, in the article on *Tabari and Early Arab Historians* which he contributed to vol. xxiii (1888) of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The philological sciences naturally come first. 'With the influx of foreign converts to Islâm an urgent need arose for grammars and dictionaries of the Arabic language in which the Word of God had been revealed. To elucidate the meanings of rare and obscure words occurring therein, it was necessary to collect as many as possible of the old poems, which constituted the inexhaustible treasury of the Arabic tongue. To understand these poems a knowledge of the *Ansâb*, or genealogies of the Arabs, and of their Battles or "Days" (*Ayyâm*) and their history (*Akhbâr*) generally was requisite. To supplement the rules laid down in the Qur'ân for the conduct of life, it was

<sup>1</sup> Al-Bîrûnî's *Chronology*, ed. Sachau, p. 52, cited by Goldziher, *op cit*, 1, 209. The expression is "*ta'assaba li'l-Furs*."

<sup>2</sup> An English resident in Persia named *Glover* was metamorphosed into *Gul avar* ("Bringer of Roses"), less fortunate was a compatriot named *Reid*, a missionary, whose name ultimately necessitated a retreat from this field of activity.

necessary to find out, by questioning his "Companions" (*Ashāb*), or those who had associated with them and "followed them" (*Tawābiʿ*, *tubbaʿ* or *tābiʿūn*), what the Prophet had said and how he had acted under different circumstances, whence arose the science of Tradition (*Hadīth*). To test the validity of these traditions it was necessary to know not merely the content (*matn*) of each, but also its *isnād*, i.e., the chain of persons through whom it had been handed down ere it was finally reduced to writing, and to test this *isnād* a knowledge of the dates, characters, and circumstances of these persons was requisite, which again led in another way to the study of Biography and Chronology. Nor did the history of the Arabs alone suffice it was necessary to know something of the history of their neighbours, especially the Persians, Greeks, Himyarites, Æthiopians, &c., in order to grasp the significance of many allusions in the Qurʾān and in the old poems. A knowledge of Geography was essential for the same purpose, and also for more practical reasons connected with the rapid expansion of the Muhammadan Empire.

During the first century after the flight hardly any books were written all this knowledge continued to be handed down orally, and the Qurʾān remained almost the only prose work (and it is chiefly written in rhymed prose) in Arabic. Such as desired to study Arabic philology, poetry, and legend had to go into the Desert amongst the Bedouin tribes to pursue their researches, such as sought a knowledge of Tradition and the religious sciences had to seek it at Madīna. Knowledge could only be obtained by travelling, and this travelling "in search of knowledge" (*fi talab al-ʿilm*), rendered necessary at first by the circumstances of the case, gradually became a fashion, and finally almost a craze, favoured and justified by such traditions as "Whosoever goeth forth to seek for learning is in the Way of God until he returns home, the Angels blithely spread their wings over him, and

all creatures pray for him, even the fish in the water.”<sup>1</sup> Makhúl († A.D. 730), originally a slave in Egypt, would not on receiving his freedom leave that country “till he had gathered together all the learning which was to be found there,” and, having accomplished this, he journeyed through Hījāz, ‘Irāq, and Syria seeking for an authentic tradition as to the division of spoils taken in battle, which he at last obtained from an old man named Ziyād b. Jāriya at-Tamīmī, who had it on the authority of Habīb b. Maslama al-Fihri.<sup>2</sup> Here we have an actual application of the principle enunciated in the following words ascribed to Abu’d-Dardā. “If the explanation of a passage in the Book of God presented difficulties to me, and if I heard of a man in Birku’l-Jumād” (a most inaccessible spot in South Arabia, proverbially spoken of as equivalent to the ends of the earth) “who would explain it to me, I would not grudge the journey thither”<sup>3</sup>

The two oldest Arabic prose works of importance (except the Qur’ān) which have come down to us are Ibn Ishāq’s († A.D. 767) *Biography of the Prophet* in the recension of Ibn Hishām († A.D. 834),<sup>4</sup> and a work on genealogy by Ibnu’l-Kalbī († A.D. 763-4), of which manuscripts exist in the libraries of the British Museum and the Escorial.<sup>5</sup> Manuscript notes, however, were constantly made at an earlier date, during the first century of the Flight, by such men as Abū Huwayra, ‘Abdu’llah b. ‘Amī b. al-‘Asī, az-Zuhri<sup>6</sup> († A.D. 742) and Hasan of Basra,<sup>7</sup> who in some cases ordered that these notes should be burned at their death, because they were mere aids to memory, “and what they knew these scholars had

<sup>1</sup> Goldziher, *op cit*, vol. II, p. 177, and on these journeys *fi talabi’l-‘ilm* generally, pp. 32-33 and 175 *et seqq*

<sup>2</sup> Idem, p. 33

<sup>3</sup> Idem, pp. 176-177

<sup>4</sup> Edited by Wustenfeld (1858-60), and translated into German by Weil (1864)

<sup>5</sup> These and the following particulars are chiefly drawn from de Goeje’s excellent article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* to which I have already referred

<sup>6</sup> Goldziher, *op cit*, pp. 195-196

<sup>7</sup> De Goeje, *loc cit*

handed on by word of mouth. Indeed, as Goldziher has shown,<sup>1</sup> there existed till well into the second century after the Flight a strong feeling against the writing down of traditions, so that 'Abdu r Rahmān b Harmala al Aslamī († A D 762) had to obtain a special permission from his teacher Sa'id b al Musayyib to reduce his teachings to writing, on the pretext that his memory was not strong enough to retain them without such aids. The grounds on which this objection rested were chiefly two: a fear lest the books wherein these holy sayings of the Prophet were recorded might not be treated with enough respect; and a fear lest, on the other hand, they might, as had happened in other religions, become invested, to the prejudice of the Book of God, with an undue authority. Against this objection stood the truer view embodied in such sayings as "Knowledge not put on paper is lost." "What is committed to memory passes away, but what is written remains." "The best teacher of traditions is the written record," and the Imām Ahmad b Hanbal's reputed aphorisms, "Publish traditions only after written texts, and "the book is the most faithful recorder." Naturally such objections did not exist in the case of profane literature, and, in the short section which he devotes to the prose literature of the Umayyad period, Carl Brockelmann<sup>3</sup> mentions the following early works and writers: the Southern Arabians Wahb b Munabbih (of Persian origin<sup>4</sup>) and 'Abid b Shariya, both of San'a, of whom the former died at an advanced age in A D 728 and the latter in the reign of 'Abdu l Malik (A D 685-705). Abu Mikhnaf Lut b Yahya al Azdi, celebrated for his historical romances (d. circ. A D 750), the already mentioned az Zuhri (d. A D 742) and his pupil Muhammad b 'Abdu r Rahmān al 'Amiri († A D 737), author of an older *Muwatta* than the well

*Op cit* ii pp 196 *et seqq*

*Ibid.* p 199

<sup>3</sup> *Gesch d Arab Litt* i pp 64-67

<sup>4</sup> See Wustenfeld's *Geschichtschreiber der Araber* p 4 No 16

known law-book of the same name compiled by the Imám Málík b Anas (d. 795) Amongst the oldest Arabic prose works of which copies actually exist are the *Kitábu'z-Zuhd* (on Asceticism) of Asad b. Músá b Ibráhím († A D 749), the *Kitábu'l-fawámi'* (on Oneiromancy) of Muhammad b Shírín (see p 263, n 1 *supra*); and the *Kitábu'l-Ishárah bi-'ilmi'l-'ibárah* of Muhammad b 'Alí b 'Umar as-Sálimi Last, but not least, is the Umayyad prince Khálid b. Yazíd († A D. 704), who studied Alchemy with a monk named Marianus, composed three treatises on Occult Science, and had for his pupil the celebrated occultist Jábri b Hayyán (circ A D 776)

Brockelmann in his admirable *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (Weimar, 1897- ) divides the earlier portion of his subject into the following periods

I The purely Arabian literature (almost entirely consisting of poems composed by pagan, and a few Jewish and Christian, poets), from the earliest times till the time of the Prophet.

II The literature (also purely Arabian, and, with the exception of the Qur'an, poetical) of the Prophet and his time

III. The literature (also purely Arabian) of the Umayyad period (A D 661-750).

IV. The classical period (A D 750-1000) of Muhammadan literature, composed in the Arabic language, but no longer exclusively, or even mainly, by Arabs

V. The post-classical period (A D 1000-1258) of the same, down to the Mongol invasion, sack of Baghdad, and extinction of the 'Abbásid dynasty

Of these periods the first three but slightly concern us, and all that is needful for our purpose has been already said The periods subsequent to the Mongol invasion lie also beyond the scope of this work, since even before this momentous event the national life of Persia had been definitely detached from that of Arabia and Western Asia, and the Persian language had become the main vehicle of Persian thought.

The fourth and fifth periods, on the other hand, concern us closely for during the first (A D 750-1000) the Persian tongue had scarcely re emerged, as a literary language, from the eclipse which it suffered at the Arab Conquest and during the second, although it was once more widely and successfully cultivated for all literary purposes, there was in Persia a large co existent Arabic literature produced by Persians { The Arabic literature produced in Persia after the Mongol Invasion was far more restricted in scope, and was mainly confined to the domains of Theology, Philosophy, and Jurisprudence }

From the Persian point of view, then, whence we here regard the matter, it is the Arabic literature of 'Abbasid times with which our concern chiefly lies, and, in the present chapter, those writers who belong to what we have defined as "the Golden Age" (A D 749-847) A list of the most important of these, arranged in order of the dates of their decease, here follows

✓ (1) Ibnul Muqaffa († A D 757) the converted Magian who not withstanding the fact that he was born a Persian and a Zoroastrian is counted by Ibn Muqla († A D 939) and Ibn Khaldun the Moor († A D 1405-6) amongst the past masters of the Arabic tongue He was also as has been already remarked an accomplished Pahlawi scholar and translated from this language many works into Arabic Of these his Arabic version of Kalila and Dimna still a classic in all Arabic speaking countries alone survives in its entirety his much more important translation of the Pahlawi Book of Kings (Khudhay nama) being only known to us by citations in later histories

(2) Ibn Uqba († A D 758) the oldest biographer of the Prophet whose work as it would seem is unfortunately entirely lost

(3) Muhammad b as Saib al Kalbi († A D 763) who together with his son Hisham b al Kalbi († A D 820) was well versed in the history of the ancient Arabs

✓ (4) Isa b Umar al Thaqafi († A D 766) one of the founders of Arabic grammar the teacher of both Khalil b Ahmad (the alleged inventor of the Science of Prosody in Arabic) and the great Sibawayhi the Persian

(5) *Ibn Ishāq* († A D 767), the biographer of the Prophet, whose work (though possibly, as de Goeje thinks, still extant in its original form in the Kyuprulu Library at Constantinople) is known to us only in the recension of Ibn Hishām

(6) *Abū Hanifa an-Nu'mān* († A D 767), one of the four orthodox "Imāms" of the Sunnis, the founder of the Hanafī school, of Persian origin, and in strong sympathy with the descendants of 'Alī

(7) *Hamād b Sābūr (Shāpūr) al-Rāwīya* († A D 772-775), of Persian (Daylamite) origin, the collector and editor of the seven ancient Arabic poems known as the *Mu'allaqāt*.

(8) *Fābī b Hayyān*, the occultist (circ A D 776, see p 274 *supra*).

(9) *Muhammad b 'Abdu'llāh al-Azdi* (circ A D 777), who wrote a history of the Conquest of Syria

(10) *Abū Dulāma* († A D 777), a negro, "more jester and Court-fool than poet," who enjoyed the favour of the Caliphs al-Mansūr and al-Mahdī

(11) *Bashshār b Burd* († A D 783), the blind Persian sceptic and poet, to whom reference has already been made

(12) *Al-Mufaddal ad-Dabbī* († A D 786), tutor to the Caliph al-Mahdī during his youth, who made a collection of old Arabic poems not less important, though less celebrated, than the *Mu'allaqāt*

(13) *As-Sayyidu'l-Himyarī* ("the Himyarite Sayyid," † A D 789), a zealous Shī'ite, "whose poems" (mostly in praise of the Prophet and his family) "are distinguished," says Brockelmann (p 83), "like those of Abu'l-'Atāhiya and Bashshār, by simplicity of language"

(14) *Khalīl b Ahmad* († A D 791), the grammarian and prosodist mentioned under (4) *supra*

(15) *Sībawayhi* († A D 793), the Persian grammarian, also mentioned under (4) *supra*

(16) *Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Ansārī* († A D 795), jurisconsult and pupil of Abū Hanīfa

(17) *Mālik b Anas* († A D 795), the second of the four orthodox "Imams," the Founder of the Malikite school

(18) *Marwān b Abī Hafsa* († A D 797), poet, a Jew of Khurāsān

(19) *Muslim b al-Walīd* († A D 803), court-poet of Hārūnu'r-Rashīd and *protégé* of the Barmecides and Fadl b Sahl

(20) *Muhammad b al-Hasan ash-Shaybānī* († A D 804), the Hanafī jurisconsult, and for a while Qādī of Raqqa in the reign of Hārūnu'r-Rashīd

(21) *'Alī b Hamza al-Kisā'i* († A D 805), the grammarian, a Persian by birth, entrusted by Hārūnu'r-Rashīd with the education of his two sons al-Amīn and al-Ma'mūn

(2) *Al Abbás b al Ahnaf* († A.D. 806) another half Persian poet of the Court of Hárúnur Rashíd chiefly celebrated for his love poems

(23) *Abu Nuwás* († A.D. 806-813) also half Persian by birth one of the most brilliant and shameless poets of Hárúnur Rashíd's Court His discreditable adventures ready resource and unfailing wit are familiar to all readers of the Arabian Nights

(24) *Ibn Zabála* († A.D. 814) a pupil of Malik b Anas who wrote a History of Madína

(25) *Yahyá b Biltiq* (who flourished about A.D. 815) one of the translators of Aristotle and other Greek philosophers into Arabic

(26) *Hishám b al Kalbí* († A.D. 819-820) the historian see (3) *supra*

(-7) *Ash-Sháfi* († A.D. 820) the third of the four orthodox Imams of the Sunnis founder of the Sháfi'ite school

(-8) *Qutrub* († A.D. 821) grammarian and philologist pupil of Sibawayhi and ath Thaqafi

(29) *Al Farrá* († A.D. 822) grammarian pupil of al Kisa'i and like him of Persian origin

(30) *Al Wáqidí* († A.D. 823) the great historian of the Muslim conquests who was liberally patronised by Yahya the Barmecide and on his death left behind him 600 great boxes of books and manuscript notes each one of which required two men to carry it

(31) *Abu Ubayda Ma mar b al Muthanná* († A.D. 825) a philologist of strong *Shu'ubí* tendencies and of Jewish Persian origin the rival of al Asma'i and the bitter satirist of the Arab tribes. See p. 269 *supra*

(32) *Abu l Alahya* († A.D. 828) one of the most notable poets of this epoch who alike in his earnestness his religious pessimism and his extreme simplicity of speech stands in the sharpest contrast to his contemporary the dissolute immoral and time serving Abu Nuwas

(33) *Al Akawuak* († A.D. 828) a poet and panegyrist of Persian extraction

(34) *Ibn Qutayba* († A.D. 828) a historian of the first rank also a Persian Of the twelve works composed by him which Brockelmann enumerates (1 pp. 120-123) the best known are his *Kitábu l Ma'árif* (ed. Wustenfeld 1850) his *Adabul Kálíb* or Secretary's Manual (Cairo A.H. 1300) and his *Uyunul Akhbár* now being published by Brockelmann at Berlin

(35) *Al Asma'i* († A.D. 831) the grammarian and philologist a prominent member of that circle of learned men wherewith Hárúnur Rashíd surrounded himself

(36) *Ibn Hishám* († A.D. 834) the editor of Ibn Ishaq's *Biography of the Prophet* see (5) *supra*

(37) *Al-Akhfash* "the intermediate" (*al-Awsal*), or "the second" († A D 835, or earlier), grammarian and philologist, a pupil of Sībawayhi, and probably, like his master, of Persian extraction

(38) *Qusṭā b Lūqā*, a Christian of Ba'labakk (Baalbek), a notable translator and compiler of medical, astronomical, and mathematical works, flourished about this time. He was still famous in Persia as an authority on these subjects in the middle of the eleventh century of our era, when Nāsir-i-Khusraw wrote —

*Har kasi chizi hami-gūyad zi lira ra'y-i-khwish,*  
*Tā gumān āyad-'t k'ū Qusṭāy bin Lūqā-sī*

"Every one, in his benighted ignorance, propounds some theory,  
That thou may'st suppose him to be a Qusṭā b Lūqā"

(39) *Al-Madd'ini* († A D 840-845), a prolific writer on history, of whose works, unfortunately, only the titles (of which **xxx** are enumerated in the *Fihrist*) are preserved to us

(40) *Al-Kindī* († A D 841), the eminent Arabian philosopher and physician

(41) *Ibnū'l-A'arabi* († A D 844), a well-known grammarian of Indian origin, the step-son and pupil of al-Mufaṣṣdal (see No 12 *supra*)

(42) *Abū Abd'illāh Muhammad b Sallām al-Fūmahī* († A D 845), the author of a Biography of Poets (*Ṭabaqātu'sh-Shu'arā*), which is unfortunately lost, and is only known to us by citations

(43) *Ibn Sa'd* († A D 845), secretary to the celebrated *al-Wāqidī* (see No 30 *supra*), author of the great *Kitābū't-Ṭabaqātū'l-Kabīr*, which is to be published in the near future at Leyden

(44) *Abū Tammām* († A D 846), panegyrist of the Caliph al-Mu'tasim and later of 'Abdu'llāh b Tahīr, the governor of Khurasān, but better known as the author of the great Anthology of ancient Arabic poetry called the *Hamāsa*, "wherein," says his commentator at-Tabrizī, "he showed himself a better poet than in his own verses"

(45) *Diku l-Finn* († A D 849), the Syrian *Shu'arībī* and Shī'ite poet.

Other names might be added, but for our present purpose these are sufficient, since they serve to indicate how large a proportion (thirteen out of forty-four) of the most celebrated contributors to "classical" Arabic literature were of Persian extraction. For fuller particulars of their works and characteristics the reader must refer to von Kremer, Brockelmann, and other writers on the *Litteraturgeschichte* and *Culturgeschichte* of the Arabs

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DEVELOPMENTS OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF ISLAM

Two of the most important early sects of Islam, the republican Kharijites and the legitimist Shi'ites, have been already discussed at some length while the extremists (*Ghulat*) of the latter body, with their wild doctrines of Incarnation (*Hulul*), "Return" (*Rij'at*) and Metempsychosis (*Tandasukh*), will form the subject of the following chapter (pp 308 *et seqq*) These sects may be regarded, primarily at least, as to a large extent political in their character, and as representing respectively the democratic Arabian and the monarchic Persian tendencies as applied to matters of religion To them must be added a third sect of mainly political character, the *Murjiya*, and a fourth of more purely theological or speculative nature, the *Qadariyya* or *Mu'tazila* These four sects are regarded by von Kremer,<sup>1</sup> who follows Ibn Hazm,<sup>2</sup> as the four primary divisions (*Hauptsekten*) of the Muhammadans,<sup>3</sup> and, according

*Gesch d Herrschenden Ideen d Islams* pp 15 *et seqq*

*Ibid* pp 10 and 14 Ibn Hazm a Spanish Arab of Cordova, died about A D 1024 and is the author of the oldest extant work on the Sects of Islam MSS of this work (which has never been printed) are very rare See Flügel's *Vienna Catalogue* vol II pp 197-199 and for Ibn Hazm's biography de Slane's transl of *Ibn Khallikān* vol II pp 6, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Shahrīstānī who also reckons four substitutes the *Shifī'iyya* for the *Murjiya* while al Ijī (A D 1355) enumerates seven principal heterodox sects See Dr H Steiner's *Mu'tazilīen* pp 2-3

to his view,<sup>1</sup> the two last arose at the Umayyad capital, Damascus, partly under Christian influences, during the first half of the eighth century of our era (A.D. 718-747), while the two first, as we have already seen, were already in existence in the latter part of the seventh century.

The *Murjiya* (so called from the root *arja'a*, "he postponed," because they postpone or defer judgment against sinful Muslims till the Day of Resurrection,<sup>2</sup> and refuse to assert that any true believer, no matter what sins he may have committed, is certainly damned) were essentially that body of Muslims who, unlike the Shí'ites and Khárijites, acquiesced in the Umayyad rule. In doctrine they otherwise agreed in the main with the orthodox party, though, as von Kriemer thinks, they greatly softened and mitigated its more terrible features, holding "that no believing Muslim would remain eternally in hell,"<sup>3</sup> and, in general, setting faith above works. Their views were so evidently adapted to the environment of the Umayyad Court, with which no sincere Shí'ite or Khárijite could have established any *modus vivendi*, though Christians and other non-Muslims stood in high favour there, and held important offices,<sup>4</sup> that it is hard to regard them otherwise than as time-servers of the Vicar of Bray type. With the fall of that ungodly dynasty their *raison d'être* ended, and they ceased to exist as an independent party, though from their ranks arose the celebrated Abú Hanífa, the founder of one of the four orthodox schools of the Sunnis which endure to the present day.<sup>5</sup>

"It is much to be regretted," says von Kriemer,<sup>6</sup> "that we have so little accurate information about this sect, but they shared the fate of that whole epoch. The Arabic historical sources of the

<sup>1</sup> *Cultungesch. Skizzen*, pp. 1-9

<sup>2</sup> See Lane's *Arabic-English Lexicon*, Bk. 1, p. 1033

<sup>3</sup> *Gesch. d. Herrsch. Ideen*, p. 25

<sup>4</sup> *Skizzen* p. 2. The Court-poet al-Akhtal was a Christian

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6, and cf. *Herrsch. Ideen*, p. 26

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3

Umayyad period perished altogether and the oldest writings preserved to us arose in Abbasid times. We are therefore driven back for information as to the Murjiya to the scattered notices which we find in later Arabic writers.

¶ Of much greater interest and importance was the sect of the *Qadariyya* ("Partisans of Free Will") or *Mu'tazila* ("Seceders,") whose leading idea, to quote Dr The M 'tazila. Steiner,<sup>1</sup> "is best characterised as the enduring protest of sound human understanding against the tyrannical demands which the orthodox teaching imposed upon it." They called themselves *Ahlu l 'Adl wa t Tawhid*, or "Partisans of the Divine Justice and Divine Unity," of the Divine Justice, because the orthodox doctrine of Predestination, which represented God as punishing man for sins forced upon him, as it were, by a Fate which he had no power to resist, made God in effect a pitiless Tyrant of the Divine Unity, because, said they, the orthodox party, who make the Qur'an coeternal and coexistent with God, and who regard the Divine Attributes as separate or separable from the Divine Essence, are really Polytheists or *Mushrikun* (associaters of other gods with the One God). The account generally given of their origin and name is that Wásil b 'Aṭá al Ghazzál, a Persian disciple of the celebrated theologian Hasan of Baṣra, differed from his master as to the question whether a believer, after he had committed a grievous sin, still deserved to be called by that appellation. Wásil held that such an one could neither be called a believer nor an unbeliever, but must be regarded as occupying a middle position between the two, and withdrew to a different part of the mosque to expound this view to those of his fellow students who followed him. whereupon Hasan of Baṣra observed to those who stood round him, "*I'tazala 'an ná*" ("He hath seceded from us"), in consequence of which saying Wásil's party were called by their opponents "*al Mu'tazila*" ('the

Separatists" or "Seceders")<sup>1</sup> This, the generally received account of the origin of the sect, would make 'Irāq "cette antique Babylonie, où la race sémitique et la race perse se rencontraient et se mélangeaient, et qui devint bientôt le centre de la science, puis, peu de temps après, sous les 'Abbāsides, le siège du gouvernement"<sup>2</sup> its birthplace and cradle; but von Kremer,<sup>3</sup> as we have seen, thinks that their doctrines were developed at Damascus under the influence of Byzantine theologians, notably of John of Damascus and his disciple Theodore Abucara. The other and more definite name *Qadariyya*<sup>4</sup> by which they were known referred to their doctrine of man's free-will, and the spurious tradition "*al-Qadariyyatu Majūsu hādhihi'l-Ummati*," "the Partisans of Free-will are the Magians of this Church" (because, as Steiner observes, to explain the existence of Evil they also set up a second Principle, the Will of Man, against the Will of God), was freely applied to them by their adversaries. Even in much later times, at the beginning of the thirteenth century of our era, we find the Persian Sūfī poet Mahmūd Shabistārī referring to this tradition in that well-known manual for mystagogues the *Gulshan-i-Rāz*<sup>5</sup> as follows

The *Qadariyya*  
compared to  
Magians

*Har ān kas-rā ki madh-hab ghayr-i-Jabrī-ast,  
Nabī faīmūd kī mānūd-i- gabr-ast*

Every man whose faith is other than predestinarian  
Is, according to the Prophet, even as a guebree."

Von Kremer, as already noticed, considers that the Doctrine of Free-will was already taught in Damascus at the end of the seventh century of our era by Ma'bad al-Juhanī (died in A.D. 699), who had imbibed the doctrine from a Persian named Sinbūya, and who was put to death by the Umayyad

<sup>1</sup> See Steiner's *Mu'taziliten*, pp 24-26, and Dozy's *Hist de l'Islamisme*, p 204      <sup>2</sup> Dozy, *op cit*, p 201      <sup>3</sup> *Streifzüge*, pp 7-9

<sup>4</sup> On the quite opposite senses in which the word *qadar* is used, see Steiner, *op cit*, pp 26-28      <sup>5</sup> Ed Whinfield, l 538, pp 32 and 54

Caliph 'Abdul Malik, or, according to other narratives, by Hajjāj b Yusuf 'Awfī, the Persian thirteenth century writer, in the account of the Umayyad Caliphs contained in bk v of his immense collection of stories, the *Jawāmi'u'l Hikāyat* (which, unfortunately, exists only in rare manuscripts), says that Ghaylān the Qadarī was put to death in Damascus by Hishām b 'Abdul Malik (A D 724-743) for teaching the doctrine of Free will, and even describes how he was confuted by the Caliph in the presence of the doctors of Syria Yazīd II (A D 720-724), on the other hand, is said to have himself embraced the views of the Qadarīyya, and, if 'Awfī may be believed, he also showed a marked partiality for the House of 'Alī Shī'ite and Qadarī tenets, indeed, often went together, and the Shī'ite doctrine current in Persia at the present day is in many respects Mu'tazilite, while Hasan al Ash'arī, the great opponent of the Mu'tazilites, is by the Shī'ites held in horror Muhammad Darabī,<sup>1</sup> the author of an Apology for the poet Hāfidh,<sup>2</sup> mentions as one of the three grounds whereon objection was commonly made to his verses that some of them appeared to indicate an inclination to the doctrines of al Ash'arī, "which, he adds, "the doctors of the Imamiyya' (or Shī'ites of the Sect of the Twelve) "regard as false" and he cites as an example of these Calvinistic leanings the verse —

*Dar kūy i nik nāmi mādrā guzar na dādan  
Gar tu na mī pasandī taghyīr kun qadrā rī'*

They suffered us not to enter the Street of Good Repute  
If thou likest it not then change Destiny!

It was, however, under the earlier 'Abbasid Caliphs, notably in the reign of the Caliph al Ma mun (A D 813-833) and his

P 5 of an excellent little pamphlet entitled *Lafṣa i Ghaybiyya* lithographed in Tih-ran in A H 1304 (A.D 1887) to which my attention was directed by my friend Mr Sidney Churchill one of the finest Persian scholars I have ever met

*Diwān of Hāfidh* ed Rosenzweig Schwannau vol 1 p 16

son al-Wáthiq (A.D. 842-847), that the Mu'tazilite school was most powerful. It had taken possession of these Caliphs and their Courts, had enriched its stores of argument and methods of dialectic by the study of Greek Philosophy, and, supported thus by its internal strength and the external favour of the governing classes, bade fair altogether to extinguish the orthodox party, towards whom, in spite of its generally liberal and tolerant attitude, it showed itself irreconcilably hostile. The orthodox doctrine that the Qur'án was uncreate they held in particular detestation. In the year A.H. 211 (A.D. 826 Tabarí iii, p. 1099) al-Ma'mún, having nearly provoked a civil war by his Shí'ite proclivities, and especially by his nomination of the Eighth Imám of the Shí'ites, 'Alí ar-Ridá, as his successor to the throne (a difficulty whence, with singular inconsistency, he extricated himself by secretly poisoning the Imám and instigating the assassination of the too zealous minister, Fadl b. Sahl, who had counselled this step), proclaimed the doctrine that the Qur'án was created, not uncreate, as an indisputable truth; and seven years later, in the last year of his Caliphate, he compelled seven eminent men of learning (amongst whom was Ibn Sa'd, the secretary of the great historian al-Wáqidí) to declare their adhesion to this doctrine, after which he wrote a long letter to Isháq b. Ibráhím bidding him question such theologians as he suspected of holding the prohibited belief, and punish such as refused to declare the Qur'án to be created. Some two dozen eminent and highly esteemed Muslims, the most notable of whom was Ahmad b. Hanbal, the founder of one of the four orthodox schools of the Sunnites, were haled before this tribunal, and, by threats and imprisonment, most of them were induced to subscribe to the Caliph's declaration that the Qur'án was created, save Ahmad b. Hanbal, who stood firm, and, but for the sudden death of al-Ma'mún, which happened shortly afterwards, would have been in grave peril of his life.<sup>1</sup> Al-

<sup>1</sup> See *Tabarí*, iii, pp. 1112-1131, where this transaction is very fully reported.

Wáthiq followed his father's example, and thereby provoked in the year A.H. 231 (A.D. 845-6) a dangerous conspiracy headed by Ahmad b. Nasr al Khuzá'í, which was, however, revealed by the indiscretion of several of the conspirators who had been indulging to an unwise extent in *nabldh*, or date wine.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding this, in the exchange of prisoners effected in the same year<sup>2</sup> al Wáthiq caused each released Muslim captive to be questioned as to his belief on this burning question, and such as declared their belief that the Qur'an was uncreate he refused to receive (deeming them, as it would seem, outside the pale of Islám), but sent them back to their captivity. According to another account also given by Tabarí,<sup>3</sup> the released captives were likewise called upon to deny that God on the Last Day would be visible to men's eyes, this doctrine, like that of the uncreate Qur'an, being held by the orthodox, who in all things followed the very letter of God's Word, and utterly refused to exercise that process of *ta'wíl*, or Allegorical Interpretation, affected by their antagonists. In this point again the Shí'ites of to-day are at one with the Mu'tazilites, and Muhammad Darábi, in the *Apology for Háfidh* already cited (p. 283, n. 1 *supra*) gives the following verse of that poet as one which has brought him under the suspicion of inclining to the revived orthodoxy associated with the name of al Ash'arí —

*In ján i áriyát ki bi Háfidh sipurd Dust—  
Pu i rukh ash bi binam u taslim i uay kunam*

This borrowed soul which the Friend [*i.e.* God] entrusted to Háfidh—

One day I shall see His Face and shall yield it up to him

It would not be just that our admiration for the Mu'tazilites, whose liberal views so greatly conduced to the splendour of this wonderful epoch, should tempt us to overlook their

Tabarí in pp. 1343-1350. See also Dozy's *Islamisme* pp. 238-239.

Ibid. p. 1351.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 1533-4.

unusual and regrettable harshness towards those doctrines which are now generally prevalent and accounted orthodox in all Sunnite countries. Yet perhaps there was a reason for their harshness. They may have been conscious that doctrines of extreme Calvinism or Fatalism, if the word be preferred, must in the long run (at least in Asia, which is more logical than Europe in its applications of theory to daily life) destroy effort and prevent progress, they may have foreseen that the literal interpretation of an inspired Scripture which followed naturally from a belief in its Eternity, not only in the future but in the past, would inevitably stereotype and narrow the religious outlook in such a way that all flexibility, all power of adapting itself to new conditions or carrying conviction to the minds of intelligent men, would be lost, and they may have felt that the belief that God could be seen by men must tend to an anthropomorphic and debased conception of the Deity. Whether or no they realised these results of the victory of orthodoxy, such were in reality its effects, and the retrograde movement of Islām, inaugurated by the triumph of al-Ash'arī (of which we shall speak in a later chapter), was but accelerated and accentuated by the overthrow of the Caliphate and the sack of Baghdad by the vandals of Mongolia in the middle of the thirteenth century. Changíz and Hulágú on the one hand, and al-Ash'arī on the other, probably contributed as much as any three individuals to the destruction of the material and intellectual glories of the Golden Age of the early 'Abbásid Caliphs.

The further development of the Mu'tazilite doctrine is admirably summed up by Dozy (Chauvin's French translation, pp 205-207)

Further develop-  
ment of the  
Mu'tazilite  
doctrine

"This doctrine was subsequently remodelled and propagated under the influence of the Philosophy of Aristotle. The sect, as was in the nature of things, subdivided. All the Mu'tazilites, however, agreed in certain points. They denied the existence of the Attributes in God, and contested everything which could prejudice the dogma

of the Divine Unity To remove from God all idea of injustice they recognised man's entire freedom of action They taught that all the truths necessary for salvation belong to the domain of reason and that they may be acquired solely by the light of reason no less before than after Revelation in such wise that man at all times and in all places ought to possess these truths But to these primary propositions the different sects added others peculiar to themselves Most of them have treated theology with much profundity others on the contrary became involved in hair splittings or even diverged widely from the spirit of Islam Some there were for example, who believed in Metempsychosis and who imagined that the animals of each species form a community which has as a prophet an animal like unto themselves strange to say they based this last doctrine on two verses of the Qur'an And there were many other follies of the same kind But it would be unjust to render all the Mu'tazilites responsible for the errors of some and when all is said and done they deserve to be spoken of with respect In meditating on what religion bade them believe they became the rationalists of Islam Thus it came about that one of their principal affirmations was that the Qur'an was really created although the Prophet had asserted the contrary Were the Qur'an uncreate they said it would be necessary to admit the existence of two Eternal Beings From the moment when the Qur'an or Word of God was held as something created it could no longer having regard to the immutability of the Deity be considered as belonging to His essence Thereby the whole dogma of revelation was little by little seriously shaken and many Mu'tazilites frankly declared that it was not impossible to write something as good as or even better than the Qur'an They therefore protested against the dogma of the divine origin of the Qur'an and against Inspiration The idea which they entertained of God was purer and more exalted than that of the orthodox They would not listen to any corporeal conception of the Divinity Mahomet had said One day ye shall see your Lord as you saw the full moon at the Battle of Badr and these words which the orthodox took literally were for them an ever new stumbling block They therefore explained them away by saying that man after his death would know God by the eyes of the spirit that is to say by the reason They equally refused to countenance the pretension that God created the unbeliever and showed them

Meaning of course that every man was created a potential believer and that the unbelievers only became so by their own frowardness, not by God's will

selves but little pleased with the consecrated formula which says of God that 'He hurteth and He advantageth' They could not admit the miracles related in the Qur'án, and so denied that the sea was dried up to yield a passage for the Israelites led by Moses, that Moses' rod was changed into a serpent, and that Jesus raised the dead to life Mahomet himself did not escape their attacks There was one sect which maintained that the Prophet married too many wives, and that his contemporary Abú Dharr al-Ghifári had much more self-restraint and piety than him, which also was perfectly true"

The best European accounts of the Mu'tazilites with which I am acquainted, besides Dozy's, are those of Steiner<sup>1</sup> and von Kremer, but I must content myself here with briefly indicating the results of their investigations as to the progress, influence, relations, and final decline of this interesting movement. As to its origin these two scholars differ, the former regarding it, at least in its primary form, as "arising in Islám independently of all external influences," while the latter, as we have seen, considers that it was influenced even in its inception by Christian theology. Be this as it may, at a very early date it was profoundly influenced by Greek Philosophy.

The Mu'tazilite  
and Greek  
Philosophy

"We may venture to assert," says Steiner (p 5), "that the Mu'tazilites were the first who not only read the translations of the Greek Naturalists and Philosophers prepared under the auspices of al-Mansúr and al-Ma'mún (A D 754-775 and 813-833), and evolved therefrom all sorts of useful knowledge, but likewise exerted themselves to divert into new channels their entire thoughts, which had hitherto moved only in the narrow circle of ideas of the Qur'án, to assimilate to their own uses the Greek culture, and to combine it with their Muhammadan conscience The Philosophers proper, al-Fárabí († A D 950), Ibn Síná (Avicenna, † A D 1037), and Ibn Rushd (Averroes, † A D 1198), belong first to a later age Al-Kindí († circ A D 864) was the earliest, and lived somewhat before them,

<sup>1</sup> Two pamphlets, both published in 1865 One is entitled *Die Mu'taziliten oder die Freidenker im Islam*, the other, *Die Mu'taziliten als Vorläufer der islamischen Dogmatiker und Philosophen, nebst Anhang, enthaltend kritische Anmerkungen zu Gazzali's Munqidh*.

but seems to have devoted his special attention to precisely those problems raised by the Mutazilites. His followers however avoided theological questions. Without directly assailing the Faith they avoided all conflict with it so far as possible. Theology and Natural Science including Philosophy were treated as separate territories with the harmonising of which no further trouble was taken. Ibn Sina appears to have been a pious Muslim yet Shahrastāni includes him amongst those who properly belonged to no definite confession but standing outside Positive Religion evolved their ideas out of their own heads (*thul th r f*). Ibn Rushd also is accounted a good Muslim. He endeavoured to show that philosophical research was not only allowed but was a duty and one enjoined even by the Qur'ān but for the rest he goes his own way and his writings are with few exceptions of philosophic and scientific contents. Thus was the breach between Philosophy and Dogma already fully established with Ibn Sina. The Mutazilite party had exhausted its strength in the subtle controversies of the schools of Basra and Baghdad. Abul Husayn of Pārsā a contemporary of Ibn Sina was the last who gave independent treatment to their teaching, and in some points completed it. Zamakhshari († A.D. 1143-4) the famous and extraordinarily learned author of the *Kashshaf* reduced the moderate ideas of his predecessors to a pleasant and artistic form and applied them consistently and adroitly to the whole region of Qur'ānic exegesis but gave to the teaching itself no further development."

✓ The political power of the Mu'tazilites ceased soon after the accession of al Mutawakkil, the tenth 'Abbasid Caliph (A.D. 847), but the school, as we have seen, was powerfully represented nearly three centuries later by Zamakhshari, the great commentator of the Qur'an. The subsequent fate of the views which they represented will be discussed to some extent in later chapters, but, for the convenience of the reader, and for the sake of continuity, we may here briefly summarise the chief stages which preceded the final "Destruction of the Philosophers" by al Ghazzali and his successors, and the

\* The Arabian Aristotelians, says Steiner were properly rather Natural Scientists than Philosophers. Their most signal achievements belong to the region of observation of natural phenomena above all Medicine and Astronomy.

triumph of orthodox Islām in the form wherein it now prevails in all Sunnite countries.

(1) The *Period of Orthodox Reaction* began with al-Mutawakkil (A.D. 847-861), the brother and successor of al-Wāthiq Dozy, after describing some of the acts of barbarity and ingratitude committed by this "cruel and ungrateful tyrant,"<sup>1</sup> continues "Notwithstanding all this, al-Mutawakkil was extremely orthodox, and consequently the clerical party judged him quite otherwise than we should do. A well-known Muslim historian (Abu'l-Fidā) is of opinion that he went a little too far in his hatred for 'Alī, for the orthodox also held this prince, in his capacity of cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, in high esteem; 'but for the rest,' says he, 'he was of the number of the most excellent Caliphs, for he forbade man to believe that the Qur'ān was created' He was orthodox, what matter then if he was a drunkard, a voluptuary, a perfidious scoundrel, a monster of cruelty? But he was even more than orthodox: animated by a burning zeal for the purity of doctrine, he applied himself to the persecution of all those who thought otherwise, torturing and exterminating them as far as possible. The prescriptions relative to the Christians and Jews, which during the preceding reigns had almost fallen into oblivion, were renewed and aggravated."<sup>2</sup> Towards 'Alī and his descendants this wicked Caliph entertained a particular hatred. It pleased him that his Court jester should pad himself with a great paunch (for 'Alī had grown corpulent in later life) and, in the assumed character of the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, should dance before him with all manner of grotesque buffooneries. A celebrated philologist who, in reply to his interrogations, ventured to prefer the sons of 'Alī to those of the tyrant Caliph, was trampled to death by the Turkish guards. The tomb of al-Husayn, the Martyr of Kerbelā, was destroyed by his order,

<sup>1</sup> Dozy's *l'Islamisme* (Chauvin's translation), pp. 248 *et seqq.*

<sup>2</sup> See Tabarī, III, pp. 1389 *et seqq.*, and 1419

and its site ploughed and sown, and the visitation thereof forbidden. Even the most eminent and honourable theologians, such as al Bukhārī, the great traditionist, were exposed to charges of heresy.

(2) *The Teaching of al Ash'arī*<sup>1</sup> So far, as Dozy points out, the triumph of the orthodox was merely material, intellectually, and in methods of dialectic, they retained the same inferiority as before in respect to their opponents the Mu'tazilites. Not till twelve years had elapsed after al Mutawakkil's death was born (in A.H. 260 = A.D. 873-4) the man who, having been trained in the Mu'tazilite school, renounced their doctrines in his fortieth year, and, armed with the logical weapons with which they themselves had supplied him, deserted to the hostile camp, and, for the remainder of his life, carried on an energetic and successful campaign against their views. This was Abu l Hasan al Ash'arī, a descendant of that foolish Abu Mus'ī al Ash'arī to whose ineptitude Mu'īwiya owed so much in the arbitration of Dawmatul Jandal. His literary activity was enormous, and after he had broken with his teacher, the Mu'tazilite doctor al Jubbā'i,<sup>2</sup> he produced polemical works on all manner of theological topics to the number of two or three hundred, of which Spitta<sup>3</sup> enumerates the titles of one hundred. So distrustful of philosophy were the orthodox that many of them, especially the fanatical followers of Ibn Hanbal, unwilling to believe that an alliance with it could result in aught but evil, continued to regard al Ash'arī with the deepest suspicion, but in the end his services to orthodoxy were fully recognised.

In course of time says Dozy after speaking of the growing influence of al Ash'arī's teaching the influence of the Mu'tazilites continued to diminish more and more. The loss of temporal power

See Spitta's excellent monograph *Zur Geschichte Abu l Hasan Al Ash'arī's* (Leipzig 1876)

Dozy pp 25 - 26

<sup>3</sup> Op cit pp 6-81

was the first misfortune which befel them, the defection of al-Ash'arí was the second. 'The Mu'tazilites,' says a Musulmán author, 'formerly carried their heads high, but their dominion ended when God sent al-Ash'arí.' Nevertheless they did not disappear all at once, and perhaps they exist even at the present day, but they had no longer any power. Since the eleventh century<sup>2</sup> they have had no doctor who has achieved renown, while the system of al-Ash'arí, on the contrary, has been more and more elaborated, so that, in its ultimate form, it includes not only religious dogma, but also embraces matters purely philosophic, such as ontology, cosmology, &c."<sup>3</sup>

(3) *The Brethren of Purity* (Ikhwánu's-Safá). For our knowledge of this remarkable society or fraternity of Encyclopædists and Philosophers we are chiefly indebted to Flugel<sup>3</sup> and Dieterici,<sup>4</sup> especially the latter, who has summarised and elucidated their teachings in a series of masterly monographs. Favoured by the liberal ideas of the Persian and Shí'ite House of Buwayh, who, displacing for a time the Turkish element, became practically supreme at Baghdad about the middle of the tenth century (A.D. 945), this somewhat mysterious society carried on the work of the Mu'tazilites, aiming especially at the reconciliation of Science and Religion, the harmonising of the Law of Islám with Greek Philosophy, and the synthesis of all knowledge in encyclopædic form. The results of their labours, comprising some fifty separate treatises,<sup>5</sup> were published, according to Flugel, about A.D. 970, and supply us with an admirable mirror of the ideas which prevailed at this time in the most enlightened circles of the metropolis

<sup>2</sup> Since Zamakhsharí lived till A.D. 1144, it would seem better to substitute "twelfth" for "eleventh."

<sup>3</sup> Dozy, pp. 255-256

<sup>3</sup> Z D M G, vol. xiii, pp. 1-43

<sup>4</sup> In some dozen publications (texts, translations, and dissertations), published between the years 1858 and 1886

<sup>5</sup> Published in four vols. at Bombay, A.H. 1305-6, a Persian version of the same, comprising fifty tracts (pp. 167), was lithographed at Bombay in A.H. 1301 = A.D. 1884. For the contents of these tracts see Dieterici's *Die Philosophie der Araber im x. Jahrhundert nach Christ, erster Theil, Einleitung u. Makrokosmos* (Leipzig, 1876), pp. 131-137.

of the 'Abbâsid Caliphs. As authors of these tracts five men of learning are named by Shahrazurî, viz., Abu Sulaymân Muhammad b Nâsir al Bustî, called also al Muqaddasî (or al Maqdasî), Abul Hasan 'Alî b Hîrun az Zinjî, Abu Ahmad an Nahrajurî (or Mihrajî), al 'Awfî, and Zayd b Rîf'â, of whom, having regard to their *nîsbas*, the first three at any rate would seem to have been Persians. So too was Ibn Sînâ (Avicennâ), the great physician and philosopher with whose death (A D 1037), according to Dieterici,<sup>1</sup> "the development of philosophy in the East came to an end."

(4) *Al Ghazzâlî*, "the *Proof of Islam* and *Champion of Orthodoxy*." This eminent theologian, who was professor at the Nidhâmiyya College of Baghdad from A D 1091 to 1095, and died in A D 1111, who had explored all realms of speculation accessible to him, and had at last found refuge in the mysticism of the more moderate Sufis, "felt himself called, as Steiner says,<sup>2</sup> "to stand forth as the scientific apologist of Islâm, and to restore the threatened faith to surer ground." Tholuck (*Bibl Sacra*, vi, 233), cited by H A Homes at pp 7-8 of his translation of the Turkish version of the *Alchemy of Happiness* (Albany, N Y, 1873) appraises him very highly. "Ghazzâlî, says he, "if ever any man has deserved the name, was truly a divine, and he may justly be placed on a level with Origen, so remarkable was he for learning and ingenuity, and gifted with such a rare faculty for the skilful and worthy exposition of doctrine. All that is good, worthy, and sublime which his great soul had compassed, he bestowed upon Muhammadanism, and he adorned the doctrines of the Qur'ân with so much piety and learning that, in the form given them by him, they seem, in my opinion, worthy the assent of Christians. Whatsoever was most excellent in the philosophy of Aristotle or in the Sufi mysticism, he dis-

creetly adapted to the Muhammadan theology. From every school he sought the means of shedding light and honour upon religion, while his sincere piety and lofty conscientiousness imparted to all his writings a sacred majesty. He was the first of Muhammadan divines." Dieterici, on the other hand, judges him harshly. "As a despairing sceptic," says he,<sup>1</sup> "he springs suicidally into the All-God [*i.e.*, the all-pervading Deity of the Pantheists] to kill all scientific reflexion."

The teachings of the "Brethren of Purity" were carried to the West by a Spanish Arab of Madrid, Muslim b Muhammad Abu'l-Qásim al-Majrítí al-Andalusí, who died in A D 1004-1005. Thanks to them, and later to the great Moorish philosopher Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Spain became a centre of philosophical learning, whence, during the Middle Ages, Europe derived such light as it possessed on these great questions. "The strife between Nominalism and Realism," says Dieterici,<sup>2</sup> "which for centuries stirred the learned world, is a product of this development, and had already, during the ninth and tenth centuries, set in motion all the minds of the East."

Of the *Sunnites* little need here be said, since, though numerous in Persia under the various Turkish or half Turkish dynasties which generally prevailed there until the rise of the Safawís in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and counting amongst their numbers Persians so eminent as Farídu'd-Dín 'Attár, Sa'dí, Jalálu'd-Dín Rúmí, and many others, they were never really in harmony with Persian tendencies and aspirations, and are at the present day almost extinct save at Lár and in a few other districts. It should be mentioned, however, that the founders of the four orthodox schools, those of the Hanafites, Málikites, Sháfi'ites, and Hanbalites, all flourished during this period of Mu'tazilite domination. Of these the eldest, Abú Hanífa, was born in A D 700 and died in 767. He was of

<sup>1</sup> *Op cit*, p 157

<sup>2</sup> *Op cit*, p 161

Persian descent.<sup>1</sup> *Mālik* was born at *Madīna* in A.D. 713 or 714, and died in 795. He was cruelly flogged by al *Manṣūr* for suspected disaffection towards the 'Abbāsid dynasty, "from which time," says Ibn *Khallikān*,<sup>2</sup> "he rose higher and higher in public estimation, so that the punishment he underwent seemed as if it had been an honour conferred upon him." Ash *Shāfi'ī* was an Arab of the tribe of *Quraysh*, was born in the year (some say<sup>3</sup> on the very day) of *Abu Hanīfa*'s decease, and died at *Cairo* in A.D. 820. Lastly, *Ahmad b. Hanbal*, a native of *Merv*, but apparently of Arab race, was born in A.D. 780, and died at *Baghdad* in 855. He was the favourite pupil of ash *Shāfi'ī*, who said, on setting out for *Egypt*, "I went forth from *Baghdad* leaving behind me no more pious man and no better jurisconsult than *Ibn Hanbal*." 4 To his steadfast courage in refusing to admit that the *Qur'ān* was created allusion has already been made.

These are the four "Imāms" of the orthodox Sunnites, and the schools which they founded differ but in minor points, and are on good terms with one another. (The Hanafite school prevails in *Turkey*, the *Mālikite* in *Morocco*, the *Shāfi'ite* in *Egypt* and *Arabia*, and the *Hanbalite* in some parts of *Africa*. All are held in equal contempt by the *Shi'ites* and *Nāṣiri*. *Khusraw*, the great *Isma'īli* poet and propagandist of the eleventh century of our era, goes so far as to accuse them of sanctioning the most detestable vices—a charge which, save in so far as concerns the alleged crudely anthropomorphic tendencies of the *Hanbalites*, merits no serious consideration.

Of the *Shi'ites* it will be more convenient to speak at length in a subsequent chapter, but it may be noted that the great schism which divided them into the

See de Slane's translation of *Ibn Khallikān* vol. iii p. 505.

Ibid. vol. ii p. 547. This probably occurred in A.D. 764-5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. vol. ii p. 571.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. vol. i p. 44.

<sup>5</sup> See his *Diwān* lithographed at *Tabriz* in A.H. 1280 pp. 115 and 709. Cf. *Dor's Islamism* pp. 441-443.

“Sect of the Seven” (*Sab‘iyya*) or Isma‘ilis, and the “Sect of the Twelve” (*Ithnā ‘ashariyya*) which prevails in Persia at the present day, had its origin in this period which we are considering. In the doctrine of the Imāmate, the belief that the supreme spiritual authority must be vested in one of the descendants of ‘Alī, designated in each case by his predecessor, and endowed with supernatural or even divine attributes, both sects are agreed, and they are also agreed as to the succession of Imāms as far as the sixth, Ja‘far as-S‘idīq, who died A.D. 765. Here, however, the difference begins. Ja‘far had in the first instance designated his eldest son Ismā‘īl to succeed him, but later (owing, it is generally said, to his discovery that Ismā‘īl had indulged in the forbidden juice of the grape) he took the Imāmate from him and conferred it on his younger brother Mūsā, called al-Kādhim. Soon afterwards Ismā‘īl died, and his body was publicly shown ere its interment, in order that there might be no doubt as to the fact of his death. Yet, though most of the Shī‘ites transferred their allegiance to Mūsā, some remained faithful to Ismā‘īl, either refusing to believe that he was dead (for he was reported by some to have been seen subsequently to the date of his alleged death at Basra),<sup>1</sup> or maintaining that the Imāmate had been transmitted through him (since he had predeceased his father, and had therefore, in their view, never actually assumed the Imām’s functions) to his son Muhammad; in either case fixing the total number of Imāms at seven, and repudiating the claims of Mūsā and his five successors. Further discussion of the developments of these two sects may be conveniently deferred to a subsequent chapter.

Lastly, a few words must be said here of the earlier Sūfis, or Mystics, whose fully developed system of Spiritualistic

Pantheism will be described in another place. Their name, as is now generally admitted, has nothing at all to do with the Greek σοφός (which appears,

Origin of the  
Sect of the  
Seven, and the  
Sect of the  
Twelve

The early Sūfis

<sup>1</sup> *Shahīstān*, ed Curetton, p 146

written with the soft letter *sln*, not the hard *sdd*, in the Arabic *ṣaylasīf*, "philosopher, and *ṣafīfī*, "sophist"), nor, as the Sufis themselves pretend, with the Arabic root *ṣafa*, "purity", nor with the *ahl al ṣuffa*, or "people of the bench," religious mendicants of the early days of Islām who sat outside the mosque craving alms from the devout (but is simply derived from the Arabic word *ṣūf*, "wool, as is shown, amongst other things, by the Persian epithet *ḥathmīna pūsh*, "wool clad, which is commonly applied to them. Woollen garments were from the first regarded as typical of the primitive simplicity affected by the early Muslims of 'Umar, the second Caliph, Mas'ūdī tells us<sup>1</sup> that "he used to wear a *jubba* of wool (*ṣūf*) patched with pieces of leather and the like, while Salmān the Persian is described by the same historian<sup>2</sup> as "wearing woollen raiment," and the same fact is recorded<sup>3</sup> of Abu 'Ubayda b al-Jarrāh. Later, when luxury became prevalent, those who adhered to the old simple ways of the Prophet's immediate successors, silently protesting against the growing worldliness and extravagance of their contemporaries, were termed "Sufis, and, in this earliest form, alike in respect to their simple attire, their protest against ostentation and extravagance, their piety and quietism, they present a remarkable analogy with the early Quakers. There is always in extreme quietism, and that spirituality which is impatient of mere formal worship and lip-service, a tendency towards Pantheism but in these early Sufis this tendency is much less noticeable than, for instance, in Eckhart, Tauler, and the fourteenth century German mystics though later, under the influence of Neo Platonist ideas, it became very conspicuous. Of the early Sufis al Qushayrī (d. A.D. 1073) speaks as follows —<sup>4</sup>

Know that after the death of the Apostle of God the most excellent of the Muslims were not at the time distinguished by any

*Muruju dh Dhahab* ed Barbier de Meynard vol iv p 193

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid* p 195

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid* p 196

<sup>4</sup> Cited at p 31 of Jamī's *Na'ahidul Uns* ed Nassau Lees Calcutta 1858

distinctive name save in regard to their companionship with the Apostle, seeing that there existed no greater distinction than this, wherefore they were called 'the Companions' And when those of the second period came in contact with them, such of these as had held converse with the 'Companions' were named the 'Followers,' a title which they regarded as of the noblest Then those who succeeded them were called 'Followers of the Followers' Thereafter men differed, and diverse degrees became distinguished, and the elect of mankind, who were vehemently concerned with matters of religion, were called 'Ascetics' and 'Devotees' Then heresies arose, and there ensued disputes between the different sects, each one claiming to possess 'Ascetics,' and the elect of the people of the *Sunna* (the Sunnites), whose souls were set on God, and who guarded their hearts from the disasters of heedlessness, became known by the name of *Súfis*, and this name became generally applied to these great men a little before the end of the second century of the Flight" (A H 200 = A D 815-816)

A little further on (*op. cit*, p 34) Jámí explicitly states that the term "*Şúfî*" was first applied to Abú Hášhim, who was born at Kúfa, but passed most of his life in Syria, and died in A D. 777-8, and (p 36) that the *Súfî* doctrines were first explained and expressed by Dhu'n-Nún of Egypt, a pupil of Málik (the founder of the Málikite school mentioned above), who died in A D 860, that they were expanded, systematised, and reduced to writing by Junayd of Baghdad (d. A D. 910), and openly preached in the pulpit by Shiblî (d. A D 945) Very few of the great *Súfî* teachers lived before the close of the second century of the Flight (A D. 815-816) Ibráhím b. Adham († A D 777), Dá'úd of Tayy († A D. 781), Fudayl b 'Iyád († A D 803), and Ma'rúf of Karkh († A D 815), were, I think, the only ones of note except the above-mentioned Abú Hášhim. Hasan of Basra († A D 728), who has been already spoken of in connection with the Mu'tazilites, is sometimes reckoned amongst them, but, as Dozy has pointed out,<sup>1</sup> his sombre religion, chiefly inspired by fear, contrasts

<sup>1</sup> *L'Islamisme* (Chauvin's French translation), pp 319-320 Cf also pp 201-202, where Hasan's character is well depicted

sharply with the religion of love proper to the mystics The saintly woman Rábi'a al-'Adawíyya\* († 752-753) is a far better type of the true mystic, and many of her sayings strongly recall those of Saint Theresa It is in allusion to her that Jámi says in his *Nafahat* (ed Nassau Lees, p 716) —

Wa law kána n nísá u ka má dhakarná  
 La faddallu 'n nísá a ala r ryáli  
 Fa la t ta nílthu li smi sh shamsi ayb  
 Wa la t tadhkíru fakhr\* li l hildli

Were women all like those whom here I name  
 Woman to man I surely would prefer  
 The Sun is feminine nor deems it shame  
 The Moon though masculine depends on her

The following anecdote told by Dozy<sup>3</sup> is typical of her attitude One day, being ill, she was visited by Hasan of Basra and Shaqíq of Balkh The former said, "That one is not sincere in faith who does not patiently endure the chastening of the Lord Shaqíq, desiring to improve upon this, said, "That one is not sincere in faith who does not find pleasure in the chastening of the Lord But Rábi'a replied, "That one is not sincere in faith who, in the contemplation of the Lord, does not forget the chastening"

It is related in the *Memoirs of the Saints* compiled by Shaykh Faridu d Din 'Attár a great Persian mystic of the thirteenth century, that she was once asked, "Dost thou hate the Devil?" "No, she replied They asked, "Why not?" "Because," said she, "my love for God leaves me no time to hate him" "I saw the Prophet of God," she continued, "in a dream, and he asked me, 'O Rábi'a, dost thou love me?' 'O Apostle of God,' I replied, 'who is there who loveth thee not?' But the love of God hath so taken possession of every particle

See de Slane's translation of *Ibn Khallikán* vol 1 pp 515-517  
 In Arabic grammar

<sup>3</sup> *Op cit* p 319

of my being that there is no room left me to love or hate any one else ””

These sayings, which might be indefinitely multiplied, will indicate the character of this early mysticism of Islám. The wild pantheistic character which is later assumed, especially in Persia, was, as I think, superadded to it at a much later date. The philosophy so far as it can be called a philosophy which it gradually developed is, in my opinion, mainly of Neo-Platonist origin,<sup>1</sup> and, contrary to a view which, though losing ground, is still very prevalent, was very little, if at all, influenced by Indian speculations.<sup>2</sup> Von Kremer differentiates the earlier Arabian quietist Súfism from the later Persian pantheistic development, expressing the opinion<sup>3</sup> “that Súfism proper, as it finds expression in the different Dervish orders (which I sharply distinguish from the simple ascetic aim which already appeared in the earliest Christianity, whence it passed over into Islám) arose essentially from Indian ideas, and in particular from that school of Indian philosophy known by the name of Vedánta.”

In another place<sup>4</sup> he says

“It appears, indeed, that Súfism took into itself two different elements, an older Christian-ascetic, which came strongly to the front even in the beginning of Islám, and then later a Buddhist-contemplative, which soon, in consequence of the increasing influence of the Persians on Islám, obtained the upper hand, and called into being the Mystics proper of Islam. The former aim expressed more the Arabian character, the latter the Persian ”

Fully admitting the force and value of this distinction, I am

<sup>1</sup> This point has been very admirably worked out by my friend and former pupil, Mr R A Nicholson, in his *Selected Poems from the Divan-i Shams-i-Tabriz* (Cambridge, 1898), especially pp 111-116. Cf von Kremer, *Gesch.-Streifzüge*, p 45

<sup>2</sup> This is, for example, Dozy's view (*l'Islamisme*, p 317), and he cites Trumpp (*Z D M G*, xvi, p 244) as saying “Dass der Sufismus ein indisches Produkt ist, darüber kann kein Zweifel obwalten, und noch näher bestimmt ist der Sufismus ein speciell *Buddhistisches* Erzeugniss ”

<sup>3</sup> *Gesch.-Streifzüge*, p. 46      <sup>4</sup> *Heirsch Id.*, p 67

not convinced that the existence of Indian influence has been satisfactorily proved. Persian studies have suffered much at the hands of Indianists and Comparative Mythologists and Philologists, *e.g.*, in the attempts made to explain the Avesta solely from the Vedas without regard to the Zoroastrian tradition on the one hand, and in the favour accorded, particularly in England and Germany, to the hideous Indian pronunciation of the modern language on the other, not to mention the exaggerated admiration often expressed for the Persian compositions of Indian writers, and the concurrent neglect of all Persian literature produced in Persia during the last four centuries<sup>1</sup> and we have good reason to be on our guard against the tendency of Indianists to trace everything, so far as possible, to an Indian origin, or to generalise about "the Aryan genius." Long before Neo Platonism came to the Arabs it was, as has been already observed (p 167 *supra*) brought to Persia in the days of Nushirwán (sixth century of our era), and I confess that, so far as I can judge, Sufi pantheism presents far more striking analogies with Neo-Platonism than with either Vedántism or Buddhism, while historically it is much more likely that it borrowed from the first than from either of the two last. To the later developments of Sufism, to which alone those remarks apply, we shall recur in a subsequent chapter.

Before leaving the religious manifestations of this epoch, it is proper to remind the reader what religions, besides Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity, and what philosophies, besides those of the Greeks, were still active and potent forces in Western Asia. Apart from Manichæanism, of which we shall have a few more words to say, elements of the old Babylonian civilisation were

<sup>Th M dx</sup>  
<sup>M / las la.</sup>

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See for example the article on *Persian Literature* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Dr Ethe does more justice to the modern poets of Persia in his article *Neupersische Litteratur* (pp 311-316) in vol 11 of Geiger and Kuhn's *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie* (Strassburg 1897).

represented by the Mandæans or true Sabæans (*Sābiyān*) of the marshes between Wásit and Basra (the ancient Chaldæa), also named by the Arabs from their frequent ceremonial ablution *al-Mughtasila*, which term, misapprehended by the Portuguese navigators of the seventeenth century, gave rise in Europe to the absurd misnomer "Christians of St John the Baptist."<sup>1</sup>

From these true Sabæans the pseudo-Sabæans of Harrán (the ancient Carrhæ) must be carefully distinguished. The learned

The Pseudo-  
Sabæans of  
Harrán

Chwolson was the first to explain in his great work

*Die Sabier und der Sabismus* (2 vols, St. Peters-

burg, 1856) the apparently hopeless confusion

which till that time had surrounded the term "Sabæan". Here we must confine ourselves to stating the curious fact which he brought to light, viz, that since about A D 830 two perfectly distinct peoples have been confounded together under this name, to wit, the above-mentioned Mandæans or *Mughtasila* of Chaldæa, and the Syrian heathens who flourished at Harrán (about half-way between Aleppo and Márdín) until the eleventh century of our era,<sup>2</sup> and that this confusion was brought about in the following way.<sup>3</sup> When the Caliph al-Ma'mún passed through the district of Harrán on his last campaign against the Byzantines, he remarked amongst the people who came out to meet him and wish him God-speed certain persons of strange and unfamiliar appearance, wearing

<sup>1</sup> See Chwolson's *Sabier und Sabismus*, vol 1, p 100. The most important works on the Mandæans are Dr A J H Wilhelm Brandt, *Die Mandäische Religion* (1889), Idem, *Mandäische Schriften* (1893), *Mand Grammatik* by Th Noldeke, 1875, H Pognon, Consul de France a Alep, *Inscr Mand des coupes de Khouabn* (1898). Of the book of the Mandæans, the *Sûh â Rabbâ* or *Ginzâ*, there are two editions, Norberg's, in three vols (1815-1816), and Petermann's, in two vols, (1867). Noldeke describes their literature as "eine Literatur, welche voll des grossten Widersinns ist, geschrieben in eine Mundart von der ein Kenner des Syrisches zunächst den Eindruck starker Entartung erhält."

<sup>2</sup> Chwolson, *op cit*, 1, pp 669, 671.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 11, pp 14-19. The facts are recorded in the *Fihrist* (ed Flügel, pp 320-321) on the authority of an almost contemporary Christian writer, Abû Yûsuf al-Qatîf.

their hair extremely long, and clad in tightly fitting coats (*qabá*) Al Ma'mun, astonished at their appearance, inquired who and what they were, to which they replied, "Harránians" Being further questioned, they said that they were neither Christians, Jews, nor Magians while to the Caliph's inquiry "whether they had a Holy Book or a Prophet, they returned "a confused reply" Convinced at last that they were heathens ("Zindiqs and worshippers of idols'), the Caliph ordered them, under pain of death, either to embrace Islám, or to adopt "one of the religions which God Almighty hath mentioned in His Book,' giving them respite for their decision till his return from the war Terrified by these threats, the Harránians cut their long hair and discarded their peculiar garments, while many became Christians or Muhammadans, but a small remnant would not forsake their own religion, and were greatly perplexed and troubled until a Muhammadan jurist offered, for a consideration, to show them a way out of their difficulty So they brought him much fine gold from their treasures, and he counselled them to call themselves Sabæans when al Ma'mun returned to question them, since the Sabæans were mentioned in the Qurán, yet, since little was known of them, the change of name would involve no change of beliefs or customs But al Ma mun returned not, for death overtook him on that march and most of the Harránians who had declared themselves Christians at once openly apostatised, and returned to their old beliefs, which their brethren who had adopted Islám dared not do, since apostasy is punished with death in the Muhammadan law And "since that time, says the narrator, "they have kept this name (of Sabæans) for previously there were in Harrán and the surrounding district no people who bore the name of Sabæans"

Now these pseudo-Sabæans of Harrán, a remnant of the ancient Syrian pagans of Mesopotamia, included "une élite d'hommes fort instruits, un corps d'aristocrates d'esprit, qui se sont distingués dans les sciences, et qui ont enrichi les littératures

syrienne et arabe d'un grand nombre d'ouvrages traitant de diverses matières" <sup>1</sup> Harrán, since the time of Alexander the Great, had been deeply under the influence of Greece, so that it was surnamed *Ἑλληνόπολις*, and its inhabitants, though speaking at this time the purest dialect of Syriac, were in many cases partly Greek by extraction. Strongly opposed to the Christianity professed by most of their compatriots, they were deeply attached to Greek culture, and more particularly to the Neo-Platonist philosophy, and for this reason their city had long served as a rallying-point for all those, including the Emperors Caracalla and Julian the Apostate, who clung passionately to pagan Culture. And now, under the 'Abbásid Caliphate, it was these pagans of Harrán who, more than any one else, imparted to the Muslims all the learning and wisdom of the Greeks which they had so jealously guarded, providing the capital of the Calíphs with a series of brilliant scholars, such as Thábit b. Qurra († A.D. 901), his son Abú Sa'íd Sinán, his grandsons Ibráhím and Abu'l-Hasan Thábit, his great-grandsons Isháq and Abu'l-Faraj, and many others, whose biographies will be found in chap. xii of the first book of Chwolson's great work. Many of these attained positions of the greatest eminence as physicians, astronomers, mathematicians, geometricians, and philosophers; and, thanks to their influence at a Court singular in the world's history for its devotion to learning, their co-religionists were suffered to continue in their thinly-disguised paganism <sup>2</sup>

The Syrians, both heathen and Christian, were, indeed, the

<sup>1</sup> Kunik's compte-rendu of Chwolson's work, *Mélanges Asiatiques*, vol. 1, p. 663

<sup>2</sup> Several sects existing in Western Asia at the present day, such as the Nusayris, the Yezídís (or so-called "Devil-worshippers,") &c., are, as Chwolson and others have pointed out, almost certainly survivals of ancient pagan communities, though, to secure a doubtful tolerance from their Muhammadan governors, they have been careful to conceal their real beliefs and practices, and to vindicate their right to be regarded and treated as "People of the Book," by a liberal, though not always skilful use of names regarded by the Muslims as holy

great transmitters of Greek learning to the East, whence it was brought back by the Arabs to the West. The matter is so important that I subjoin a translation of Carl Brockelmann's excellent remarks —

Syria and Mesopotamia were from the time of Alexander the Great and his followers exposed to the influences of Greek civilisation. The supremacy of the Romans and their successors the Byzantines in Syria furthered in every way the diffusion of Hellenic culture which made special progress from the time when associated with Christianity it began to react on the religious sense of the people. The Syrians were indeed but feebly disposed for original production but they were extraordinarily inclined and fitted to assimilate to themselves the results of foreign intellectual endeavour. Thus there arose in the Syrian monasteries numerous translations not only of the spiritual literature most widely current in the Greek Church but also of nearly all the profane authors (notably of Aristotle, Hippocrates and Galen) who dominated the secular learning of that epoch.

Already in the Persian Empire under the rule of the Sasanians the Syrians were the transmitters of Greek culture. Naturally it was only secular learning which was there promoted by the Court and Government. About the year A.D. 550 Khusrâw Anushirwân founded at Jundi Shapur in Khuzistan a university for the pursuit of philosophical and medical studies and this plant of Græco-Syrian culture continued to flourish even into Abbasid times.

Greek learning found a third home in the Mesopotamian city of Harran whose inhabitants surrounded by a wholly Christianised population had retained their ancient Semitic heathenism. With them as formerly in Babylon the disposition for mathematical and astronomical studies was closely united therewith. But with them also notwithstanding the fairly high level which they had already attained through the Assyrian-Babylonian civilisation these studies did not remain uninfluenced by the Greek spirit.

From all these three sources now was Greek learning brought to the Arabs in translations. Already at the Court of al Mansur we meet with a physician from Jundi Shapur who is supposed to have translated medical works into Arabic while under Harun flourished the translator Yuhanna b. Masawayh. But it was the Caliph al Ma'mun himself filled with understanding of and a lively interest in

all scientific endeavours, who gave the greatest impulse to this activity. The *Bayt al-Hikma* ('House of Wisdom'), with its attached library and astronomical observatory, founded by him in Baghdad, was the culminating point of an active endeavour to promote learning. The translations produced under him and his immediate successors have entirely overshadowed those of the older school, and are alone preserved to us."

Amongst the most eminent translators whose names here follow are the Christians, Qustá b. Lúqá of Ba'alabakk (Baalbek), Hunayn b. Isháq of Híra, his son Isháq, and his nephew Hubaysh.

Thus did the civilisation of 'Abbásid Baghdad become the inheritor of the ancient wisdom of Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, India, and Greece, and for this it was chiefly indebted to heathens like Thábit b. Qurra, Christians like Hunayn and Qustá, Magians, converted or unconverted, like Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa',<sup>1</sup> or Mu'tazilite "heretics" like 'Amr b. Bahr al-Jáhidh, besides sundry Jews and Nabathæans. To this splendid synthesis the Arabs, though, as it has been said, "one of the acutest peoples that have ever existed," lent little save their wonderful and admirable language, but the functions of assimilation, elucidation, and transmission they performed in a manner which has made mankind, and especially Europe, their debtors. That they were sensible of their own indebtedness to these non-Muslims, who bestowed upon them the wisdom of the ancients, appears, amongst other things, from the elegy composed in praise of Thábit b. Qurra, the Sabæan physician and mathematician, by the poet Sarí ar-Raffá,<sup>2</sup> wherein he

<sup>1</sup> Amongst translators from Pahlawí into Arabic are mentioned in the *Fihrist* (ed. Flügel, pp. 244-245), besides Ibnu'l-Muqaffa', the family of Naw-Bakht (see also *op. cit.*, pp. 177 and 274), who were ardent Shí'ites, Bahram, the son of Maidán-sháh, *múbad* of Nishápúr, and a dozen others. Mention is also made of two learned Indians who made translations from the Sanskrit, and of the celebrated Ibnu'l-Wahshíyya who translated the *Book of Nabathæan Agriculture*.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Khallikan, Wustenfeld's text, vol. 1, No. 127, de Slane's transl., vol. 1, pp. 288-289.

says "Philosophy was dead, and he revived it amongst us the traces of medicine were effaced, and he restored them to light

Strange and heterogeneous were the elements which made up the intellectual atmosphere of Baghdad during the first century of 'Abbásid rule. The pious Muslims of Mecca and Madína who came thither were scandalised to find unbelievers invested with the highest offices at Court, and learned men of every religion holding friendly debate as to high questions of ontology and philosophy, in which, by common consent, all appeal to revealed Scripture was forbidden. Yet was there one religious community which seemed wholly excluded from the general toleration of that latitudinarian Court to wit, the Manichæans, or *Zindiqs* as they were generally called. Persecutions of the *Zindiqs* are mentioned by Tabarí as occurring in the reign of al Mahdí (A.D. 780, 782) and al Hádí (A.D. 786-7). In the reign of Hārūn r Rashíd a special Inquisitor (*Sahibu z-Zanádíqa*) was appointed to detect and punish Manichæans,<sup>1</sup> amongst whom not only Persians and other foreigners, but even pure Arabs, like the poets Sálíh b 'Abdu l-Quddus and Mutí' b Ayás, were numbered. In the reign of al Ma mun, whose truly Persian passion for religious speculation earned him the title of *Amir al Káfirín*, "Commander of the Unfaithful," the lot of the *Zindiqs* was less hard, nay, according to von Kremer<sup>2</sup> it was fashionable to pose as a heretic, and we find a poet remonstrating in the following lines with one of these sheep dressed in wolf's clothing —

*O Ibn Ziyád father of, Jafar!*

*Thou professest outwardly another creed than that which thou  
hidest in thy heart*

*Outwardly according to thy words thou art a Zindiq*

*But inwardly thou art a respectable Muslim*

*Thou art no Zindiq but thou desirest to be regarded as in the  
fashion!*

Von Kremer's *Streifzüge* pp. 210 et seqq.

Al Ya qubí ed Houtsma p. 546

<sup>3</sup> *Op cit* pp. 41-42

## CHAPTER IX

### THE GREAT PERSIAN HERESIARCHS OF THIS PERIOD

THE active life of the pre-Muslim creeds of Persia, as opposed to outwardly Muhammadan heresies embodying and reviving in new forms pre-Muslim and non-Muslim ideas, finds its latest expression in the Pseudo-Prophet Bih-áfáridh the son of Máhfurúdhín, of whom scanty accounts are preserved to us in the *Fihrist* (p. 344) and in al-Bíruni's *Chronology of Ancient Nations* (Sachau's transl., pp. 193-4), whereof the latter is as follows :

“In the days of Abú Muslim, the founder of the ‘Abbásid dynasty, came forward a man called Bih-afarídh the son of Mahfurudhín in Khwaf, one of the districts of Nishapúr, in a place called Sirá-wand, he being a native of Zawzan. In the beginning of his career he disappeared and betook himself to China<sup>\*</sup> for seven years. Then he returned, bringing with him amongst other Chinese curiosities a green shirt, which, when folded up, could be held in the grasp of a man's hand, so thin and flexible it was. He went up to a temple during the night, and on descending thence in the morning was observed by a peasant who was ploughing part of his field. He told this man that he had been in heaven during his absence from them, that heaven and hell had been shown unto him, that God had inspired him, had clothed him in that shirt, and had sent him down to earth in that same hour. The peasant believed his words, and told people that

<sup>\*</sup> Perhaps influenced by the legend of Mání (Manes)

he had beheld him descending from heaven So he found many adherents amongst the Magians when he came forward as a prophet and preached his new doctrine

He differed from the Magians in most rites but believed in Zoroaster and claimed for his followers all the institutes of Zoroaster He maintained that he secretly received divine revelations and established seven prayers for his followers one in praise of the one God one relating to the creation of heaven and earth one relating to the creation of the animals and their nourishment one relating to death one relating to the Resurrection and Last Judgment one relating to those in heaven and hell and what is prepared for them and one in praise of the people of Paradise

He composed for them a book in Persian He ordered them to worship the substance of the Sun kneeling on one knee and in praying always to turn towards the Sun wherever it might be to let their hair and locks grow to give up the *zam ama* at dinner not to sacrifice small cattle unless they were already enfeebled not to drink wine not to eat the flesh of animals that have died a sudden death as not having been killed according to prescription not to marry their mothers daughters sisters or nieces and not to exceed the sum of four hundred *dirhams* as dowry Further he ordered them to keep roads and bridges in good condition by means of the seventh part of their property and of the produce of their labour

When Abu Muslim came to Nishapur the *mubadhs* and *herbadhs*<sup>3</sup> assembled before him telling him that this man had infected Islam as well as their own religion So he sent Abdullah b Shu ba to fetch him He caught him in the mountains of Badghis and brought him before Abu Muslim who put him to death together with such of his followers as he could capture

His followers called *Bih áfaridhiyya* still keep the institutes of their founder and strongly oppose the *Zamzamus* amongst the Magians They maintain that the servant of their prophet had told them that the prophet had ascended into heaven on a common dark brown horse and that he will again descend unto them in the same way as he ascended and will take vengeance on his enemies <sup>4</sup>

That is the mumbling of prayers and graces characteristic of the Zoroastrian practice

These marriages (called *kl zetu das*) were not only sanctioned but approved by Zoroastrianism

<sup>3</sup> The priests of the second and third grades of the Zoroastrian religion The chief priests are called *dastur*

<sup>4</sup> Compare the expectations entertained by the followers of al Muqanna

According to the short account in the *Fihrist* (p 344), Bih-áfarídh accepted Islám at the hands of two of Abú Muslim's *dd'is* named Shabíb b Dáh and 'Ab du'lláh b Sa'íd, and adopted the black raiment of the 'Abbásids, but afterwards apostatised and was slain. This account, which rests on the authority of Ibráhím b al-'Abbás as-Šúllí († A.D. 857-8), adds that "there are to this day in Khurásán a number of people who hold his doctrine." The sect is also mentioned, with the alternative name of Saysániyya, by Shahrístání (p 187), who describes them as "the most hostile of God's creatures to the Zamzamí Magians," adding that "they recognise the prophetic mission of Zoroaster, and honour those kings whom Zoroaster honours."

The meagre information which we possess concerning Bih-áfarídh does not permit us to form a clear idea as to the essential nature of his doctrine, of which the two most important features, perhaps, are the prominence accorded to the number seven, and the belief in the "occultation" and "return" of the founder. Of the importance attached to certain numbers (7, 12, 19, &c) by various sects deriving from the extreme Shí'ites (*Ghulát*), and of the persistent recurrence of the belief in the "Return" (*rij'at*) of their heroes, we shall come across numerous examples from this epoch down to our own days. Concerning these *Ghulát* or extreme Shí'ites Shahrístání says (p 132)

"They are such as hold extreme views (*ghalaw*) in respect to their Imáms, so that they raise them above the limits of created beings, and ascribe to them Divine virtues, so that often they liken one of the Imáms to God, and often they liken God to mankind, thus falling into the two extremes of excess (*ghulurww*) and defect (*taqsir*). These anthropomorphic tendencies of theirs are derived from the sects of the *Hulúhyya*

as to his "Return" in the section devoted to him a few pages further on. Al-Balkhí, writing about A.H. 350 (A.D. 960), speaks of the Bih-áfarídhís as existing in his time from personal knowledge. See vol 1 of Cl. Huart's ed. and transl. of the *Kitabu'l-Bad' wa't-Ta'rikh*, p 164 of the translation.

[who believe that the Deity can pass into a human form] the *Tanásukhiyya* [who hold the doctrine of Metempsychosis] the Jews and the Christians. For the Jews liken the Creator to the creature while the Christians liken the creature to the Creator. And these anthropomorphic tendencies have so infected the minds of these ultra Shīites that they ascribe Divine virtues to some of their Imams. This anthropomorphism belongs primarily and essentially to the Shī'a and only subsequently was adopted by certain of the Sunnis. The heretical doctrines of the ultra Shīites are four — Anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*) change of [Divine] Purpose (*bada*) return [of the Imam *riʾaʿ*] and Metempsychosis (*tanasukh*). In every land they bear different names: in Isfahan they are called *Khurramiyya* and *Kudīyya*; in Ray *Mādakīyya* and *Sinbādīyya*; in Adharbayjan *Dhaqulīyya*; in some places *Muhammura* (wearing red as their badge) and in Transoxiana *Mubayyida* (wearing white as their badge).

These ultra Shī'ite sects, then, which we have now to consider, and which, under the leadership of Sinbadh the Magian, al Muqanna' "the Veiled Prophet of Khurasan, Bábak, and others, caused such commotion in Persia during this period, do but reassert, like the later Isma'ilis, Bāṭinis, Carmathians, Assassins, and Hurufis, the same essential doctrines of Anthropomorphism, Incarnation, Reincarnation or "Return," and Metempsychosis which doctrines appear to be endemic in Persia, and always ready to become epidemic under a suitable stimulus. In our own days they appeared again in the Babi movement, of which, especially in its earlier form (A.D. 1844-1852), they constituted the essential kernel though in later time, under the guidance of Bah'íulláh († A.D. 1892) and now of his son 'Abbás Efendi "the Most Great Branch" (who appears to be regarded by his followers as a "Return" of Jesus Christ, and is so considered by the now fairly numerous adherents of this doctrine in America), they have been relegated to a subordinate, or at least a less conspicuous, position. The resemblance between these numerous sects, whose history can be clearly traced through the last eleven centuries and a half, is most remarkable, and

extends even to minute details of terminology, and to the choice of particular colours (especially red and white) as badges. Thus the early Bábís, like the *Mubayyida* of the period now under discussion, wore *white* apparel,<sup>1</sup> while they imitated the *Muhammura* in their fondness for *red* by their choice of ink of that colour in transcribing their books. An interesting question, for the final solution of which material is still wanting, is the extent to which these ideas prevailed in other forms in pre-Muhammadan Persia. The various ultra-Shí'ite risings of which we shall have to speak are commonly regarded, alike by the oldest and the most modern Muhammadan historians, as recrudescences of the doctrines of Mazdak, of whom we have already spoken in the chapter on the Sásánians (pp 168-172 *supra*). This is probable enough, but unfortunately our knowledge of the principles on which the system of Mazdak reposed is too meagre to enable us to prove it. It is, however, the view of well-informed writers like the author of the *Fihrist* (pp 342-345), who wrote in A.D. 987; Shahristání (pp 193-194), who wrote in A.D. 1127, the celebrated minister of the Seljúqs, Nidhamu'l-Mulk (*Siyásat-náma*, ed Schefer, pp 182-183), who was assassinated in A.D. 1092 by an emissary of those very Isma'ílís whom he so fiercely denounced in his book as the renovators of the heresy of Mazdak, and others, while the modern Bábís have been similarly affiliated both by the historians *Lisánu'l-Mulk* and Ridá-qulí Khán in Persia, and by Lady Sheil<sup>2</sup> and Professor Noldeke<sup>3</sup> in Europe. In the *Fihrist* the section dealing with the movements of which we are about to speak is entitled (p 342) "the Sect of the Khurramiyya and Mazdakiyya," these being regarded as identical with one another, and with the *Muhammura* ("those who made red their badge"), the

<sup>1</sup> See my translation of the *New History of the Bab* (Cambridge, 1893), pp 70, 283

<sup>2</sup> *Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia* (1856), p 180

<sup>3</sup> In an article entitled *Orientalischer Socialismus*, in vol. xviii, pp 284-291 of the *Deutsche Rundschau* (1879)

followers of Bábak "al Khurrami, and, apparently, the *Muslimiya*, or sects who believed that Abu Muslim was the Imám, or even an incarnation of the Deity, amongst whom Sinbádh the Magian and Isháq "the Turk" (so called, we are told, not because he was of Turkish race, but because "he entered the lands of the Turks and summoned them to believe in the Apostolic Mission of Abu Muslim") are included. Similarly of al Muqanna' al Biruni says (*op. laud.*, p. 194) that "he made obligatory for them (i.e., his followers) all the laws and institutes which Mazdak had established," while Shahrastáni, as we have already seen, regards the terms Mazdaki, Sinbádi, Khurrami, Mubayyida, and Muhammira as synonymous. The *Nidhámul Mulk*, in chap. xlv of his *Siyásat namá* (ed. Schefer, pp. 182-183, French translation, pp. 265-268<sup>1</sup>) is more explicit. According to him, after Mazdak's execution his wife, named Khurrama, fled from Ctesiphon to Ray with two of her husband's adherents, and continued to carry on a successful propaganda in that province. The converts to her doctrine were called either Mazdakites (after her husband) or Khurramites (*Khurram dindán* or *Khurramiya*) after her. The sect continued to flourish in Ázarbayján, Armenia, Dáylam, Hamadán, Dinawar, Isfahán, and Ahwáz—in other words, throughout the north and west of Persia (*Fihrist*, p. 342)—until the days of Abu Muslim, and was amongst the disaffected elements whose support and sympathy he succeeded in enlisting in his successful attempt to overthrow the Umayyad Caliphate.

To the reverence and even adoration with which Abu Muslim was regarded by his followers we have already alluded (p. 243 *supra*), and his murder by the Caliph al Mansur was almost immediately followed by the rebellion of Sinbádh the

R bell  
Si b dh th  
Magian  
A.D. 755-756)

From chap. xi of this work onwards the numbers of the chapters in the translation are one ahead of those they bear in the text two successive sections in the text (pp. 15 and 131) being called fortieth

Magian,<sup>1</sup> who had been Abú Muslim's friend and partisan a significant fact, as showing that the great propagandist's religious views were not sufficiently intolerant to alienate from his cause even "guebres." Starting from Níshápúr, his native place, with the avowed intention of avenging Abú Muslim, he soon collected a numerous following, occupied Qúmís and Ray (where he took possession of the treasures which Abú Muslim had deposited in that city), and declared his intention of advancing on the Arabian province of the Híjáz and destroying the Ka'ba. He soon attracted to him hosts of Magians from Tabaristán and elsewhere, Mazdakites, Ráfidis (Shí'ites), and "Anthropomorphists" (*Mushabbíha*), whom he told that Abú Muslim was not dead, but that, being threatened with death by al-Mansúr, he had recited the "Most Great Name" of God, and turned himself into a white dove,<sup>2</sup> which flew away. His armed followers are said to have numbered some 100,000 men, and if, as stated by al-Fakhrí, 60,000 of these were left dead on the field when he was finally, after many successes, defeated and slain by the 'Abbásid general Jahwar b Marrár, this can be no exaggeration. This insurrection, though formidable, was short-lived, only lasting seventy days, according to the most trustworthy accounts, though the Nidhámu'l-Mulk says seven years, which is certainly an error.

Ishák "the Turk," whom we have already mentioned, was another of Abú Muslim's *dá'is* or propagandists, who, on the death of his master, fled into Transoxiana, and taught that Abú Muslim was not dead, but concealed in the mountains near Ray, whence he would issue forth in the fulness of time. According to the

Ishaq "the  
Turk"

<sup>1</sup> Some account of this is found in al-Fakhrí (p. 203), Tabarí III, 119-120, Mas'udí's *Murúju'dh Dhihhab*, VI, 188-189, al-Ya'qubí, II, 441-442, Idem, *Kitabu'l-Buldan* (de Goeje's *Bibl. Geogr. Arab.*, vol. VII), p. 303, Dorn's *Gesch. von Tabaristan*, &c., p. 47, Idem, *Auszüge betreffend die Gesch. der Südl. Küstenländer des Kaspischen Meeres*, pp. 112-111, Justi's *Iransches Namenbuch*, pp. 314-315, article *Sumbat (Sunfúdh)*, § 19.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Shahristání, *op. cit.*, p. 111, and al-Ya'qubí, II, p. 313.

*Fihrist* (p 345) he was a descendant of Zayd the 'Alid, and therefore presumably claimed himself to be the Imām, though he took advantage of Abu Muslim's popularity to recommend himself to his followers, but according to another authority cited in the same work as "well informed as to the affairs of the Muslimiyya," he was a common and illiterate man of Transoxiana who had a familiar spirit which he used to consult, and who declared that Abu Muslim was a prophet sent by Zoroaster, and that Zoroaster was alive and had never died, but would reappear in due season to restore his religion "Al Balkhī, adds our author, "and some others call the Muslimiyya (or followers of Abu Muslim) Khurram dīniyya, "and, adds he, "there are amongst us in Balkh a number of them at a village called ,<sup>1</sup> but they conceal themselves

The next manifestation of these anthropomorphic ultra Shi'ites took place a year or two later (A D 758-9),<sup>2</sup> and is thus described by Dozy<sup>3</sup> —

Still more foolish were those fanatics who inspired by Indo-Persian ideas named their prince God. So long as the victory remained doubtful the Abbasids had been able to tolerate this species of cult but since they had gained the mastery they could do so no longer for they would have aroused against themselves not only the orthodox but the whole Arab race. On the other hand they alienated the sympathy of the Persians by refusing to be God for them but they had to choose and the poor Persians who all the while meant so well were sacrificed to the Arabs. The Rawandis (of Rawand near Isfahan<sup>4</sup>) learned this to their cost when

Name uncertain perhaps *Khurramāddā* a common name of Persian villages

Tabarī (III I 9 *et seqq* and 418) mentions the incident first recorded under the year A H 141 (A D 758-9) but adds that some place it in A H 136 or 137 (A D 753-5) while he records a similar narrative under A H 158 (A D 774-5). The last two dates are those of the accession and decease of al Muṣṣur and the narrative may simply have been recorded there by one of his authorities as a piece of undated general information about that Caliph. See also Dinawarī p 380 and al Fakhri p 188

<sup>1</sup> *L Islamisme* (transl. of V Chauvin) pp 241-243

<sup>4</sup> There were two places called Rawand one near Kashan and Isfahan

they came to present their homage to al-Mansur, they called him their God, and believed that they saw in the governor of Mecca the Angel Gabriel, and in the captain of the bodyguards him into whom the soul of Adam had migrated<sup>1</sup>. Not only was their homage rejected, but their chiefs were cast into prison<sup>2</sup>. From this moment al-Mansur ceased in the eyes of the Ráwandis to be Caliph. The ideas of legitimate prince and of God were for them two inseparable things, and if the sovereign declared himself not to be God, he could be nothing but a usurper, and ought to be deposed. This project they immediately prepared to carry out. They proceeded to the prison, but to avoid exciting attention they took with them an empty bier, which they caused to be carried before them as though they were about to bury some one. On arriving at the prison they broke down its doors, released their chiefs, and then attacked the Caliph's palace. There was an extremely critical moment, but at length troops hastened up in sufficient numbers and the Ráwandis fell beneath the blows of their swords. None the less there were thousands of people in Persia who thought as they did, and for whom the 'Abbásids were no longer Caliphs since they had refused to be God. Hence the reason why such as had fewer scruples in this matter found in this country a soil where the seed of revolt bore fruit with vigour."

The total number of these Ráwandis who walked round the Caliph's palace at Háshimiyya (for Baghdad was not yet built), crying, "This is the Palace of our Lord!" was only about six hundred,<sup>3</sup> yet the sect, as Tabarí tells us (iii, 418), continued to exist till his own time—that is, until the beginning of the tenth century. Besides the doctrines of Incarnation and Metempsychosis, they seem to have held Mazdak's views as to the community of wives, and to have believed themselves to be possessed of miraculous powers. Some of them, we learn, cast themselves from high

the other near Nishápúr (see de Slane's translation of Ibn Khallikán's *Biographical Dictionary*, vol. 1, p. 77). Dozy seems to be mistaken in supposing that the former is here meant, since Tabarí (iii, 129), al-Fakhrí (188), &c., speak of these Ráwandis as "from Khurásan."

<sup>1</sup> Al-Fakhrí only says "a certain other man." Tabarí (iii, 129) says that they supposed 'Uthmán b. Nahík and al-Haytham b. Mu'awiya to be incarnations of Adam and Gabriel respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Two hundred of them were so imprisoned.

<sup>3</sup> Tabarí, iii, p. 130.

places, believing that they could fly, and were dashed to pieces. They were certainly, as Dīnawarī says (p. 380), connected with Abu Muslim, whose death it was one of their objects to avenge. The peril in which for a short while the life of the Caliph al Mansur was placed for lack of a good horse led to the institution of the *farasun nawba* (Persian, *farasun nawbatī*) or "sentry horse," a good horse, saddled, bridled, and equipped, which was henceforth always in readiness at the Caliph's palace in case of emergency. The same institution prevailed till much later times at the Courts of local rulers—e.g., with the Sāmānid kings in the tenth century of our era.<sup>1</sup>

In the years A.D. 766–768, still in the reign of al Mansur, another Persian pseudo-prophet named Ustādhśis, rose in revolt in the districts of Herāt, Bādghīs, and Sistān,<sup>2</sup> collected a following of 300,000 men, and caused much trouble to the Government ere he was finally defeated by Khazim b. Khuzayma. Seventy thousand of his followers were slain, and fourteen thousand more, taken captive, were beheaded immediately after the battle. Ustādhśis shortly afterwards surrendered, was sent in chains to Bāghdad, and was there put to death. Thirty thousand of his followers who surrendered with him were set at liberty. Al Khayzurān, the wife of al Mahdī and mother of al Hādī and Hārūn r. Rashid was, according to Sir William Muir (who, however, does not give his authority), the daughter of Ustādhśis.<sup>3</sup> She is mentioned by ath Thā'ālībī in his *Lata'if al Ma'arif* (ed. de Jong, p. 54) as one of the three women who gave birth to two Caliphs. One of the two others was likewise a Persian, namely, Shāh Parand, the grand-daughter of Yazdigird the last Sāsānian king, who was married to Walid b. 'Abdu l

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my translation of the *Chahār Maqdala* of Nidhami-l Arudī i Samarqandī in the *J. R. A. S.* for 1899 p. 55 of the *tirage à part*.

<sup>2</sup> Tabarī iii 354–8 al Ya'qubī ii 457–8. The latter writer distinctly states that he claimed to be a Prophet.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 459.

Malik, the Umayyad Caliph, and bore him Yazíd III and Ibráhím.

About ten years later (A.D. 777-780), at the beginning of the reign of al-Mahdí, took place the much more serious rising of al-Muqanna', the "Veiled Prophet of Khurásán" celebrated by Moore in *Lalla Rookh*, by the side of which the less known and more obscure insurrection of Yúsufu'l-Barm, "whose object was naught else than to exhort men to good and turn them aside from evil,"\* sinks into insignificance. Of this celebrated heresiarch al-Bírúní gives the following account in his *Chronology of Ancient Nations* (Sachau's translation, p. 194, text, p. 211):

"Thereupon came forward Háshim b Hakím, known by the name of al-Muqanna', in Merv, in a village called Káwakímdân. He used to veil himself in green silk, because he had only one eye. He maintained that he was God, and that he had incarnated himself, since before incarnation nobody could see God. He crossed the river Oxus and went to the districts of Kash and Nasaf (Nakhshab). He entered into correspondence with the Khaqan, and solicited his help. The sect of the *Mubayyida*<sup>2</sup> and the Turks gathered round him, and the property and women (of his enemies), he delivered up to them, killing everybody who opposed him. He made obligatory for them all the laws and institutes which Mazhdak had established. He scattered the armies of al-Mahdí, and ruled during fourteen years, but finally he was besieged and killed in A.H. 169 (A.D. 785-786). Being surrounded on all sides he burned himself, that his body might be annihilated, and that, in consequence, his followers might see therein a confirmation of his claim to be God. He did not, however, succeed in annihilating his body, it was found in the oven, and his head was cut off and sent to the Caliph al-Mahdí, who was then in Aleppo. There is still a sect in Transoxiana who practise his religion, but only secretly, while in public they profess Islám. The history of

\* See van Vloten's *Recherches sur la Domination Arabe*, p. 59, Tabarí, III, 470, al-Ya'qubí, II, pp. 478-479.

<sup>2</sup> So called, as already explained, because of their white raiment, which won for them amongst the Persians the title, *Sapíd-Jamagan*.

al Muqanna' I have translated from the Persian into Arabic and the subject has been exhaustively treated in my history of the *Mubayyida* and Carmathians

The three things connected with al Muqanna' which are best known and most widely celebrated are the mask of gold (or veil of green silk, according to some accounts) which he continually wore, to spare his followers the dazzling and insupportable effulgence of his countenance, as he asserted, or, as his opponents said, to conceal from them his deformed and hideous aspect, the false moon which he caused, night after night, to rise from a well at Nakhshab (whence he is often called by the Persians *Mah sāzandā*, "the moon maker"), and the final suicide of himself and his followers, by which, as it would appear, he desired not only to avoid falling into the hands of his enemies, but to make his partisans believe that he had disappeared and would return again, with which object he

endeavoured to destroy his own body and those of his companions. Of the false moon al Qazwini (who wrote during the first half of the thirteenth century of our era) speaks as follows in his *Athdru l-Bilād* (ed Wustensfeld, p 312), under the heading *Nakhshab* —

*Nakhshab* A famous city in the land of Khurāsān from which have arisen many saints and sages. With it was connected al Hakīm al Muqanna' who made a well at Nakhshab whence there rose up a moon which men saw like the [real] moon. This thing became noised abroad through the horizons and people flocked to Nakhshab to see it and wondered greatly at it. The common folk supposed it to be magic but it was only effected by [a knowledge of] mathematics and the reflection of the rays of the moon for they [afterwards] found at the bottom of the well a great bowl filled with quicksilver. Yet withal he achieved a wonderful success which was disseminated

These works of al Biruni are unfortunately lost to us

*Ibnū l-Muqaffa* in the text is of course an error for *al Muqanna*. From al Biruni's account (cited above) it would appear that his own name was *Hāshim* and his father's name *Hakīm* but al Qazwini seems to have taken the latter as a common noun in the sense of 'The Sage'

through the horizons and noised abroad until men mentioned him in their poems and proverbs, and his memory abode amongst mankind "

Ibn Khallikán in his celebrated *Biographies* (translation of Baron MacGuckin de Slane, vol II, pp. 205-206) thus speaks of him <sup>1</sup> .

"Al-Muqanna' al-Khurásání, whose real name was 'Atá, but whose father's name is unknown to me (though it is said to have been <sup>Ibn Khallikán's account of al-Muqanna'</sup> Hakím), began his life as a fuller at Merv. Having acquired some knowledge of Magic and Incantations, he pretended to be an Incarnation of the Deity, which had passed into him by Metempsychosis, and he said to his partisans and followers 'Almighty God entered into the figure of Adam, for which reason He bade the angels adore Adam, "and they adored Him, except Iblís, who proudly refused,"<sup>2</sup> whereby he justly merited the Divine Wrath. Then from Adam He passed into the form of Noah, and from Noah into the forms of each of the prophets and sages successively, until He appeared in the form of Abú Muslim al-Khurásání (already mentioned), from whom He passed into me'. His pretensions having obtained credence with some people, they adored him and took up arms in his defence, notwithstanding what they beheld as to the extravagance of his claims and the hideousness of his aspect, for he was ill-made, one-eyed, short in stature [and a stutterer], and never uncovered his face, but *veiled* it with a mask of gold, from which circumstance he received his appellation of 'the Veiled' (*al-Muqanna'*). The influence which he exercised over the minds of his followers was acquired by the delusive miracles which he wrought in their sight by means of magic and incantations. One of the deceptions which he exhibited to them was the image of a moon, which rose so as to be visible to the distance of a two months' journey, after which it set, whereby their belief in him was greatly increased. It is to this moon that Abu'l-'Ala al-Ma'arrí alludes in the following line —

"*'Awake [from the delusions of love] ! That full moon<sup>1</sup> whose head is shrouded in a veil*

*Is only a snare and a delusion, like the Moon of al-Muqanna' !*"

<sup>1</sup> For the text of this passage, see Wustenfeld's ed., *Biography* No. 431

<sup>2</sup> Qur'an II 31

This verse forms part of a long *qasida*. To it also alludes Abul Qāsim Hibatullah b. Sinā'ul Mulk (a poet of whom we shall speak presently) in the course of a *qasida* wherein he says —

\* Beware! For the Moon of al Muqanna had no rise  
More fraught with magic than my turbaned moon! \*

When the doings of al Muqanna became notorious and his fame was spread abroad the people rose up against him and attacked him in his castle wherein he had taken refuge and besieged him there. Perceiving that death was inevitable he assembled his women and gave them a poisoned drink whereby they died after which he swallowed a draught of the same liquor and expired. On entering the castle the Muslims put all his partisans and followers to the sword. This happened in the year A.H. 163 (A.D. 777-780) may God's curse rest upon him and with God do we take refuge from such deceptions. — I never found the name or the situation of this castle mentioned by any person that I might record it until at last I read it in the *Fatāwā Shubhāt* of Yaqut al Hamawi (who will be mentioned presently if God please) which he wrote to differentiate those places which participate in the same name. He there says in the section devoted to *Sinim* that there are four places of this name whereof the fourth is the Castle of Sanam constructed by al Muqanna the Kharijite (i.e. the heretic rebel) in Transoxiana. God knows best but it would appear that this is the castle in question — I have since found in the History of Khurasan that it is the very one and that it is situated in the district of Khashk<sup>2</sup> but God knows best.

Ibnul Athir in his great chronicle (Cairo ed., vol. vi, pp. 13-14 and 17-18, under the years A.H. 159 and 161) confirms

*I.e.* the beautiful face surmounted by a turban of my beloved

This work properly entitled *Kutubul Mustarik* or *Lexicon of geographical homonyms* was published by Wustenfeld at Göttingen in 184. The passage to which allusion is here made occurs on p. 254. Shaukat Shihab-ud-Din Abu Abdillah Isqat al Hamawi the last great Muslim geographer was of Greek origin. He was born about A.D. 1178 and died about 1209.

<sup>2</sup> This is confirmed by al Yaqubi in his *Fatāwā Bulad* (Bibl. Geogr. Arab., vol. vii p. 324). It is there stated that al Muqanna and his followers when hard pressed by the believers "dank prison and all died together." See also Tabari iii 484 and 494.